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SPEECH OF MR. OGLE,

OF PENNSYLVANIA,

ON

THE REGAL SPLENDOR OF THE PRESIDENT'S PALACE.

Delivered in the House of Representatives, April 14, 1840.

The House being in Committee of the Whole on the bill making appropriations for the civil and diplomatic expenses of the Government for the year 1840, Mr. OGLE, of Pennsylvania, moved to amend the bill by striking out the following clause: "For alterations and repairs of the President's house and furniture, for purchasing trees, shrubs, and compost, and for superintendence of the grounds, three thousand six hundred and sixty-five dollars."

Mr. OGLE said: Mr. Chairman, I consider this a very important item in the bill—not as to the amount, but as to the principles involved in it. I doubt much the policy of this Government in granting the Chief Magistrate emoluments or revenues of any kind, over and above the fixed salary paid to that officer out of the Treasury of the United States. Although most of our former Presidents were in the enjoyment of some of these adventitious revenues, I am well aware that none of them retired from office with an over abundant fortune; for, sir, no former Chief Magistrate ever acted upon the principle notoriously adopted by the present incumbent, *of spending the money of the People with a lavish hand, and, at the same time, saving his own with sordid parsimony.* The President, without including many valuable incidental emoluments, (whereof I will speak before I conclude,) receives more than *quadruple* the sum paid to the head of either of the Departments, while the current private disbursements of the incumbent of that high station are certainly not greater than the expenditures of one of his Secretaries. Is there a gentleman on this floor who does not believe that the present Chief Magistrate "lays up," yearly, from \$15,000 to \$20,000, and all *hard money* at that?

But, Mr. Chairman, I object to this appropriation on higher grounds. I resist the principle on which it is demanded as anti-democratic—as running counter in its tendency to the plain, simple, and frugal notions of our republican People. And I put it to you, sir, and to the free citizens of this country, whose *servant* the President is, to say whether, in addition to the large sum of ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS which he is entitled to receive *for a single term of four years*, they are disposed to maintain, for his private accommodation, A ROYAL ESTABLISHMENT at the cost of the nation? Will they longer feel inclined to support their *chief servant* in a PALACE as splendid as that of the Cæsars, and as richly adorned as the proudest Asiatic mansion? Have the People chosen that servant to superintend the great and diversified interests of the nation; or will they consent that his time shall be occupied with the vanities, luxuries, and pleasures of life? Do they demand that his talents and all the energies of his mind shall be devoted to the discharge of the proper duties of his stewardship, or will they agree that he shall lapse into the same sloth and effeminacy which distinguish the dwellers in other palaces? Have the affairs of the People been so advantageously managed that the servant specially appointed to take charge over them may, without detriment to the Commonwealth, sink into "levity of manners," and abandon the care of the public service, to "eat, drink, and be merry?"

Although I have a peculiar "*disenchantment*," to discuss on this floor topics which have an appearance of involving personal rather than political considerations, still I am constrained by a sense of duty to offer some remarks in relation to the incidental revenues—the annual profits and expenditures of the President of the United States—the magnificent splendor of his palace, and the pompous ceremonials that "hold sway" at his republican court, and which are by many well-meaning people imagined to be equally indispensable "*to preserve the dignity*" of a Democratic Chief Magistrate as of the despot on a throne. I feel inclined, however, to examine these subjects with all "*decency and respect*" for the "*high office*" now filled by Martin Van Buren, and I trust with a proper disposition "*not to speak evil of the ruler of my people.*" But, sir, I am not ignorant that, in pursuing the course which I have marked out, it will become necessary to tread upon grounds that in former ages of the world were deemed, and in all despotic Governments of the present time are still considered, "*too delicate and sacred to be profaned*" by the tongue of a plain citizen or subject. Who does not remember that the good Queen Elizabeth hesitated not to enjoin upon her Parliaments that it was improper "*to deal, to judge, or to meddle with her majesty's prerogative royal?*" And history fully informs us that all such impertinent intermeddlers were disposed of in the most summary manner. I well know, therefore, that I shall awaken and rouse into action the base and malignant passions of the fierce Cerberuses which guard the portals, and the well-fed placemen and officeholders, the fawning sycophants, and other abettors of high prerogative, that environ the person of the royal incumbent of the

Presidential palace, with the vain hope that they can parry the well-directed arrows of republican archers. Growl, and snarl, and snap as these guardian Executive curs may, I shall nevertheless indulge myself on the topics indicated with a pretty liberal range of remark. I will not, assuredly, be restrained from the fullest exercise of the freedom of speech by the licentious course of the accredited "organ" of Martin Van Buren. I refer to the "Globe"—a newspaper which receives its pabulum, not "from the crumbs which fall from the rich man's table," but from enormous largesses and profitable contracts, voted for its sustenance from the treasury of the people—a paper that holds its existence by the sole tenure of Martin Van Buren's sovereign good pleasure, and which promulgates daily, through its broad pages, not the thoughts and motives of the miserable scavenger whose name it ostensibly wears, but the wishes and designs of his despotic master—a paper, sir, that is published "BY AUTHORITY." What honest man has read, without feelings of burning indignation, in the recent lucubrations of this "Official Organ," the foul, not to say beastly, assaults against the character and patriotism of the venerable and heroic defender of the violated honor and invaded rights of his country? Who has not been fired with anger at beholding in Martin Van Buren's organ the false and malignant representations of the hero of Tippecanoe—as "a superannuated old woman"—a "pitiable dotard"—a "granny"—a "red petticoat general"—as the "hero of forty defeats"—as delivering "inaugural addresses to pigs and poultry"—as "shut up in an iron cage, and compelled to wear an iron mask, and drink hard cider?" "No other person (says the *Globe* of April 13, 1840,) is permitted to come near him but an old servant waiter, who brings his meals, and performs 'THE NECESSARY DUTIES OF THE CAGE.' None of the domestic animals are allowed to come near the cage; and a favorite dog, WHO RAN AWAY WITH HIM IN ALL HIS BATTLES, having been observed to bark very significantly, after an interview with his master, was forthwith knocked in the head, and thrown into the Ohio."

I ask you, Mr. Chairman, whether Martin Van Buren manifests a "decent respect" for the opinions and intelligence of the American People, when he vilifies, through the agency of his official organ, an old soldier, who, to rescue "thousands of women and children from the scalping knife of the ruthless savage," freely abandoned all the endearments of home and family, endured the icy and piercing blasts of northwestern winters, wading through the deep and cold waters and black swamps of Michigan and upper Canada, sustaining, at times, an almost famished nature upon "raw beef, without salt," and often perilling life on the field of battle? Poor simple-minded old veteran, he was, no doubt, foolish enough to believe that, having given the best energies of his body and mind in youth, manhood, and mature age, to serve and defend the honor, the rights, the property, and the lives of his fellow-citizens, he would at least, in common courtesy, be entitled to their respect, if not to their love and gratitude. He doubtless supposed that, at all events, his feelings would have been spared the brutal assaults of the official organ of an individual who, in those soul-trying times, was acting in unison with the "Peace Party," in opposition to the virtuous James Madison—that good democratic President who, in a special message to Congress, had patriotically recommended an appeal to the valor of the nation as the only proper course to maintain the honor of its flag. If cruel treatment like this is deemed a suitable reward for the soldier's toils and dangers, where, hereafter, let me inquire, shall he find incentive to cheer and fire his heart in the hour of danger and on the "field of battle?" Sir, I know the generous feelings of your bosom revolt at the thought; that you are ready to exclaim, forbid it Justice, forbid it Gratitude; and that you are prepared to exhort the noble-minded youth of the country to resent the insult, and sustain the hard-earned fame and laurels of the brave and successful commander of the American armies—a commander who, according to the testimony of Col. Richard M. Johnson, "was oftener in action than any other general, and never sustained a defeat." And seeing that gallant and victorious general maligned and libelled day by day in the "official organ" of Martin Van Buren as a "red petticoat hero" and "superannuated dotard," I feel impelled by a strong sense of duty to cast aside every sentiment of mere delicacy and to "cry aloud and spare not" the abettor, the encourager, and the responsible accessory of those base libels. I shall therefore claim the right to discuss the political principles, the public conduct and behavior of Martin Van Buren, with that perfect freedom which should characterize the independent representative of a plain, honest, and brave constituency. Where I discover meanness, I will expose it to the contempt and loathing of honorable men; where I encounter audacity, I shall maul its brazen head, and level it in the dust; and where I detect corruption, I shall run my spear into its putrescent carcass, up to the very hilt.

Let me now, Mr. Chairman, turn your attention to the amendment under consideration. It proposes to strike out of the bill the sum of \$3,665, intended for alterations and repairs of the President's house, and for the purchase of furniture, trees, shrubs, and compost, and for superintendence of the President's grounds. The "site" of the Presidential palace is perhaps not less conspicuous than the King's house in many of the royal capitals of Europe. It is situate at the intersection of four spacious avenues, which radiate from this point as centre. The "palace-pile" is one hundred and seventy feet front, and eighty-six deep, and stands about the centre of a plat of ground containing twenty acres, the whole whereof is surrounded by firmly built stone walls and lanceolated iron railing, with imposing portal abutments and well barred iron gates. The main entrance front faces north, upon Lafayette square, and the garden front to the south opens to an extensive view of the river Potomac. As the palace is very accurately described by Mr. Elliot, in his "Picture of Washington," I will read a portion of that description.

"It is built of white freestone, with Ionic pilasters, comprehending two lofty stories of rooms, crowned with a stone balustrade. The north front is ornamented with a lofty portico, of four Ionic columns in front, and projecting with three columns. The outer intercolumniation is for carriages to drive into, and place company under shelter; the middle space is the entrance for those visitors who come on foot; the steps from both lead to a broad platform in front of the door of entrance. The garden front is varied by having a rusticated basement story under the Ionic ordonnance, and by a semicircular projecting colonnade of six columns, with two flights of steps leading from the ground to the level of the principal story."

Previous to its destruction by the British army, on the 24th of August, 1814, there had been expended in building the palace the sum of three hundred and thirty-three thousand two hundred and seven dollars; and since that period the further sum of three hundred and one thousand four hundred and ninety-six dollars and twenty-five cents, in rebuilding the interior, and in erecting the two splendid porticoes; making together the large amount of \$634,703 25 laid out on the palace structure alone, to say nothing about the very liberal sums that have been expended from time to time on the furniture, on alterations and repairs, on the garden, grounds, stone walls, iron fencing, and for the "stalls" for the *Royal stabled steeds*. It may be proper further to state that all the disbursements for iron fencing, for stabling, and for the superb porticoes and splendid Ionic pilasters, at the north and south fronts of the palace, have been incurred since the Administration of John Quincy Adams went out of power—the porticoes alone costing the sum of \$24,769 25. Great improvements have been made within a few years past in the *PRESIDENT'S GARDEN*. It is situated, as before remarked, on the south side of the palace, and is believed to correspond in its general arrangements with the style and fashion of some of the most celebrated royal gardens in England. It has a choice collection of both native plants and exotics, many of the latter having been gathered from almost every clime. Ornamental trees and beautiful shrubs have been "selected with great care" from the most celebrated specimens, and are now growing luxuriantly. The orangery, though not as yet on a very extensive scale, is fast improving. Rich and charming shrubbery and parterres "greet the eye" in every direction. Nor should I omit to mention that, in addition to the numerous families of the tulip, the lily, the pink, the rose, and many thousand other sweet flowers and shrubs, which all the lovers of beneficent Nature admire, the garden contains some exceedingly rare botanical and medicinal specimens; and, for the "benefit of the infirm," I will give both the "polite" and the "vulgar" names of a few of them:

Gerardia Flava, False Fox Glove.

Solidago Lanceolata, Golden Mad.

Orontium Aquaticum, Golden Club.

Circea Canadensis, Enchanter's Nightshade.

Dracocephalum Virginianum, Dragon's Head.

Saururus Cernuus, Lizard's Tail.

Prenanthes Serpentina, Lion's Foot.

Ophioglossum Vulgatum, Adder's Tongue.

Mimulus Alatus, Monkey Flower.

Clematis Odorata, Virgin's Bower.

Viola Primulifolia, Heart's-Ease.

Impatiens Maculata, Touch-me-not.

But, sir, besides those rare, and, no doubt, very valuable plants, &c. there are some other varieties that are cultivated pretty extensively in the President's garden, which address themselves for admiration more immediately to the palate than to the eye of the beholder—such as fine Neshanock potatoes, honest drumhead and early York cabbages, white and red sugar and pickle beets, marrowfat peas, carrots, parsnips, &c. &c. with abundance of the fragaria Virginiana, or strawberry, the dewberry, raspberry, &c. &c. In short, sir, the President's garden, in all its arrangements and beauties, its trees, shrubs, vines, plants, flowers, and esculents, is in perfect keeping with the sumptuous and magnificent palace. I may add that we have been informed, by an official report communicated to Congress in December last, that, during the past season, "the public grounds at the Capitol and *PRESIDENT'S MANSION* have been faithfully attended to by the *PUBLIC GARDENER AND THE HANDS UNDER HIM*. *The trees have been skilfully pruned and trained*; many choice ornamental trees and shrubs have been planted; *and the plats, borders, and gravel walks have been kept in superior order*." The report might have also stated, with perfect truth, that men had been hired by the Government, and paid out of the public Treasury, *to pick up the falling leaves*, and pluck up by the roots the xanthium spinosum and rumex acetosella, or, according to vulgar "lingo," burdock and sheep sorrel.

As the President's garden is enclosed by a high stone wall, and as the gates are generally secured with locks, very few persons, I have been informed, visit it, except by special invitation, or in company with the President or some member of his household. This exclusion, however, does not extend to Members of Congress, some of whom, (and more especially such as are favorites,) every alternate season, that is, during every long session, frequently take a stroll through the garden and adjacent grounds. The present session is my fourth at Washington, and I have been in the garden twice; but on both occasions, we (another member was in company) were compelled, on reaching the western end of the garden, to clamber over the stone wall, finding the gates locked.

In regard to the progressive improvement of the grounds and garden of the President, various suggestions have recently been made, and particularly by individuals whose taste and nice discrimination (in matters of luxury and refinement) have been greatly improved by a visit to the magnificent gardens at the palace of Versailles, and to some of the rich and sumptuous parks and gardens belonging to the Crown of England. It is supposed by these persons that the President's grounds would present a more complete and finished appearance by erecting Parian

marble balustrades on either side of the main gravel walks; by building some twenty or thirty miniature temples and pavilions at regular intervals along and adjacent to the southern outer-wall; by constructing five or six artificial lakes and fountains to pour their silver waters through the mouths of "huge river gods and sea-horses," with double the number of jets d'eau to fill the atmosphere with spray and vapor. To these improvements might well be added two or three hundred pieces of the first class of Italian statuary—such, for instance, as Saturn, Jupiter, Juno, Mercury, Diana, Neptuneus, Æolus, Apollo, Venus de Medicis, the Loves and Graces, the Naiades and Dryades, Jolly Bacchus and the Bacchantes, Vulcan and his Cyclops, Hercules, Pan, Plutus, Midas, and the Dragon that guarded the Golden Apples in the garden of the Hesperides.

There is only one other ornament which may with great propriety be procured, inasmuch as it would serve to illustrate and perpetuate in a suitable form the truth of a very important historical event, and that ornament should be a bronze colossal equestrian statue of Andrew Jackson with the little Kinderhook magician mounted on behind him. This statue I would have conspicuously placed upon the stone balustrade which crowns the palace. Before the administration of J. Q. Adams, the appropriations for improving the President's grounds had been very trifling. During his term, however, two considerable sums were voted by Congress for that purpose. The first of these grants was five thousand dollars by the act of the 25th of February, 1825, for *levelling, grading, and improving* the President's square. The second grant was five thousand eight hundred and sixty-five dollars by the act of the 22d May, 1826 for *finishing the fences, graduating and improving* the public grounds. Prior to the disbursement of these appropriations, the grounds presented a rude, uneven, and shapeless appearance; not a few of the pristine sandy knolls and small hollows still remained. The fencing, too, was quite imperfect; but, by the exercise of a commendable economy in the expenditure of the sums just mentioned, and by the *application of the money in the most beneficial manner to accomplish the objects contemplated by the laws*, the grounds of the President were brought into fine condition, the fences were put in excellent order, the "high" hills were made plain, and the "deep" valleys were made smooth, and the entire grounds, by the close of Mr. Adams's Presidency, wore a style and finish quite acceptable to the taste and judgment of our plain, republican farmers. But a new order of things was soon destined to take place. You, sir, and I, and a large majority of the American people, about the time whereof I have been speaking, were incautiously led to believe that Mr. Adams was a lavish spendthrift, and that his administration was not only wastefully extravagant, but that it was rapidly verging the very confines of monarchy, in the magnificent decorations of the Presidential palace, and by the studied introduction of court ceremonials. You doubtless well remember the voluminous reports and the indignant denunciations on the fruitful themes of extravagance and aristocracy that were spread before the country by the renowned champions of economy in both Houses of Congress during the never-to-be-forgotten winter of 1827-'8. You, sir, cannot fail, too, to recollect the lugubrious homilies which were then addressed to all pious and devout Christians in relation to the purchase by President Adams of a billiard table, billiard balls, cues and chessmen. All these solemn exhortations were but the harbingers of the memorable era of reform then about overtaking the Administration in its supposed headlong departure from the pure precepts of the frugal, simple, democratic days of the fathers of the republic. *The pruning hook of retrenchment* was about being ushered in to lop off all superfluous expenditure as "skillfully" as the same useful implement at this day prunes the redundant branches from the trees in the palace garden. *The hickory broom* was also to be introduced in order to scrub away the filthy cobwebs of aristocracy then believed to be in the process of weaving within the very precincts of the palace itself. The Augean stable was likewise to be cleansed by the reformers—a mighty work—and which in days of yore required the labors of Hercules—and no marvel—for history informs us that three thousand oxen had been confined in its stalls many years.

Well, the reformers attained to the full enjoyment of the powers of the Government in March, 1829; and here, Mr. Chairman, I almost feel inclined to resume my chair a few moments until we may all contemplate in silent admiration the strange results of that most unique system of reformation which had the omnific words "RETRENCHMENT AND REFORM" inscribed on its flaunting banner. A reformation that has faithfully persevered in encouraging "*retrenchment*" until it has reduced the annual expenditures of the Government from the enormously prodigal amount of thirteen millions down to the trifling sum of thirty-nine million dollars. A reformation which has so exercised the witty faculties of its friends that they have given birth to a very useful (but hitherto occult) arithmetical rule, by which they are enabled to demonstrate, in a manner entirely satisfactory to themselves, this odd proposition: that fewer units are contained in the number 39 than in the number 13! And the foregoing result is reached with greater mathematical precision than the *sophomore*, by the aid of "the black board," can wade through the protracted series of ratiocination in the "*Pons Asinorum*." Ever since 1829, this singular doctrine of "Retrenchment and Reform," agreeably to the new arithmetical rule, has been the order of the day, and the stern principles of a most rigid economy in every branch of the public service have been rigorously enforced—*according to the new rule*.

But, sir, the subject of "reform" is of a character too grave to be treated in this way. It would appear that it had never occurred to the reformers, that having come into power through

the "hue and cry" of extravagance, it was their highest duty, in conducting the affairs of the Government, to square their practices in accordance with the doctrines they had so boisterously advocated. On the contrary, they seem to have forgotten all that had ever been promised on the subject of Retrenchment and Reform, for, in almost every department of the Administration, the expenditures have been increased two, and in some of them four fold. This has been the case in an eminent degree in regard to the expenses for the improvement of the President's ground; you will be pleased to bear in mind that in the year 1826 the sum of \$5,835 had been appropriated for *finishing* the fences, *graduating* and improving the public grounds, and that they had thus been placed in good condition immediately prior to the advent of the Retrenchment Administration. Now, a gentleman without experience in the practices of these reformers, would be disposed to believe that they had not the boldness or the audacity to demand money to *perfect* a work which had already been *finished* in a plain substantial manner. Hold, Mr. Tyro, until you have first obtained a matriculation in the doctrines of "Retrenchment and Reform" as understood by the present Administration. In the mean time be good enough to turn to books of United States statutes for the last eleven years, and you will there discover not less than ten several acts of Congress, appropriating large sums of money to improve the President's grounds, &c. I will now present the committee with a list of those laws:

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| <i>Act of 3d March, 1829.</i> | |
| For work to be done on or about the President's house and enclosures | \$6,361 86 |
| <i>Act of 2d March, 1831.</i> | |
| For alterations and repairs of the President's House | 500 00 |
| For painting the President's house, inside and out | 3,432 00 |
| For planting trees and improving grounds, including gardener's salary | 4,000 00 |
| <i>Act of 2d March, 1833.</i> | |
| For alterations and repairs of the President's house | 500 00 |
| For planting trees and improving grounds, including the gardener's salary | 4,660 00 |
| For pedestal, wall-coping, railing, and foot-way | 10,000 00 |
| For constructing reservoirs and fountains at President's house and public offices, and enclosing and planting fountain square | 6,723 00 |
| <i>Act of 30th June, 1834.</i> | |
| For alterations and repairs at the President's house, flooring the terraces, and erecting stables | 6,670 00 |
| For gardener's salary, and for laborers employed upon the grounds and walks at the President's house, and for planting | 2,850 00 |
| For paving foot-ways at the north front of the President's house, and making a gravel carriage-way | 13,744 00 |
| <i>Act of 3d March, 1835.</i> | |
| For alterations and repairs of the President's house, and for gardner's salary, and for keeping the grounds and walks in order, including the cost of trees and shrubs | 4,200 00 |
| <i>Act of 4th July, 1836.</i> | |
| For alterations and repairs of the President's house, for gardener's salary, and for keeping the grounds and walks in order, including the cost of trees and shrubs | 3,460 00 |
| For constructing dwarf wall and fence between the Executive buildings and the President's house | 1,165 50 |
| <i>Act of 3d March, 1837.</i> | |
| For alterations and repairs of the President's house, and for superintendence of the grounds | 7,303 00 |
| For constructing a dwarf wall and fence from the southwest corner of the President's house | 1,300 00 |
| <i>Act of 6th April, 1838.</i> | |
| For alterations and repairs of the President's house, and for superintendence of the grounds | 4,815 00 |
| <i>Act of 7th July, 1838.</i> | |
| For laborers, and horse and cart and driver employed at the President's square | 2,015 00 |
| <i>Act of 3d March, 1839.</i> | |
| For alterations and repairs of the President's house, and furniture, and for superintendence of the grounds | 3,455 00 |
| For completing the special repairs heretofore proposed in the President's house, including a deficiency in a former appropriation | 1,511 22 |
| | <hr/> \$83,722 58 |

Here we have, sir, the enormous amount of \$83,722 58, squandered by these glorious retrenching reformers, in erecting stables, building *dwarf walls* and *coping*, constructing fountains, paving footways, planting, transplanting, pruning, and dressing horse chestnuts, lindens, Norway spruce, and Balm of Gilead; hauling and depositing rich soil for top-dressing flower beds and borders, training and irrigating honey suckles, trumpet creepers, primroses, lady slippers, and dandelions, cultivating sweet scented grass, and preparing beautiful bouquets for the palace saloons. The President's grounds contain about twenty acres. Our pseudo reformers have, therefore, expended on what they are pleased to call "*improvements*," an average of \$4,436 10 per acre, or \$8,065 68 per annum, since the newly invented arithmetical rule of retrenchment and reform has been put into successful operation. And yet they have the effrontery to demand an additional appropriation of \$3,665 by the bill now under consideration. Some of the improvements or alterations introduced by the reformers are of a character truly novel. You will remember that, by the act of the 25th of February, 1825, the sum of \$5,000 was appropriated for "*levelling*," grading, &c., the President's square, and that the Administration of that day took measures to carry into effect the intention of Congress, by digging down the knolls, and by filling up the hollows, and in this manner *levelling* or making plain and flat the surface of the ground. But, after all, Mr. Chairman, "*variety is the very spice of life*," and so thought our reformers. The survey of smooth lawns and gently sloping meads, covered with rich coats of white and red clover and luxuriant orchard grass, made no delightful impression on their eyes. No, sir; mere meadows are too common to gratify the refined taste of an exquisite with "*sweet sandy whiskers*." He must have undulations, "*beautiful mounds*, and other contrivances," to

ravish his exalted and ethereal soul. Hence, the reformers have constructed a number of clever sized hills, every pair of which, it is said, was designed to resemble and assume the form of AN AMAZON'S NOSE, with a miniature knoll or hillock on its apex, to denote the n—ple. Thousands of the People's dollars have been thrown away on these silly fancies, which are better adapted to please the sickly and vicious taste of palace dandies, than to gratify the simple eye of plain, republican freemen.

Although, from the earliest feudal times, all kingly establishments have been distinguished for the extent and magnificence of their stalls for the "royal steeds," yet, until the accession of our reformers to the administration of the Government, stabling formed no appurtenance to the Presidential palace. But the predecessor of the present incumbent, with some other singular notions, had an ardent love for the horse race. His fleet coursers, consequently, must be provided for; stalls must be prepared, where they might be fed, lodged, sumptuously clothed, and waited upon by palace grooms appointed to that service. He "assumed the responsibility," issued the necessary orders, and extensive structures, externally beautiful and internally commodious, were forthwith erected. Mind, Mr. Chairman, this expenditure was incurred without any authority in law. But the old chief did not mistake his power and influence over the minds of his party in Congress, for subsequently (30th of June, 1834,) he procured the passage of a law appropriating the sum of \$6,670 "for alterations and repairs of the President's House, flooring the terraces, and ERECTING STABLES!" The money was, to be sure, granted for the purpose of erecting stables, not to pay for stabling *already erected*. But no matter, it was applied to the latter object. The particular phraseology of the act had the effect (whether intended to answer that object or not) to keep the 'People ignorant of this petty exercise of arbitrary power. The introduction of the phrase "alterations and repairs of the President's House" would not have hindered the Executive, according to the ingenious mode of construing similar expressions in other acts of Congress, from applying the whole appropriation to the stables alone. For instance, by the act of 3d of March, 1839, the sum of \$3,465 was appropriated for "alterations and repairs of the President's House, and furniture, and for *superintendence* of the grounds." Now, to exhibit the ingenious construction given to the language of the law just quoted by that officer of the President who has charge over this important branch of the public service, I will present two or three vouchers for money disbursed by him in pursuance of that law:

"WASHINGTON, JUNE 14, 1839.

Bought of Wm. Buist. - \$72 00
- - - - - 2 25

Major Noland,
March 22d and 25th: To 4 dozen of large DAILY ROSES, at \$1 50 each - - - - -
June 7th: To 2 VERBENAS, 75 cents each; 1 PETUNIA, 75 cents - - - - -

\$74 25

WM. BUIST."

[Endorsed.] "Alterations and repairs of the President's House, &c., \$74 25. Wm. Buist's receipt for SHRUB-
BERRY, June 15, 1839. No. 3."

To P. Casey, Dr. \$15 00

"Commissioner of Public Buildings,
To 24 loads of MANURE, delivered at the PRESIDENT'S GARDEN - - - - -
May 7. Certified by John Ousley.
May 81, 1839. Received payment.

P. CASEY."

[Endorsed.] "Alterations and repairs of the President's House, \$15. P. Casey's receipt for manure, May 11,
1839. No. 22."

"Commissioner of Public Buildings,
To Wm. Fitzgerald, 49 loads, at 37½ cents - - - - -
Thomas Grady, 95 loads, at do - - - - -
James Lee, 2 loads, at do - - - - -
Wm. Brown, 43 loads, at do - - - - -
Michael Dooley, brooms 4, at 50 cents - - - - -

To sundry persons on account of MANURE. - \$18 37½
- - - - - 35 62½
- - - - - 75
- - - - - 16 12½
- - - - - 2 00

\$72 87½

I certify the above account to be correct.

JAMES MAHER."

[Endorsed.] "Alterations and repairs of the President's House, &c., \$72 87½. Sundries for compost, July 1,
1839. No. 6."

Here, you will observe, Mr. Chairman, Congress made an appropriation for "repairs" of the President's House, and the money has been applied to purchase *manure* to fertilize his potato and cabbage beds. Congress made an appropriation for *superintendence* of the grounds, and the money has been expended, not in *overseeing* the grounds, but in the purchase of large daily roses, verbenas, and petunias. Self-reproach forbids me to denounce, in suitable terms, these petty acts of meanness and palpable breaches of official duty. Be assured, however, that the officer who is not faithful over small things will not be faithful over greater things. And now, Mr. Chairman, having taken a promenade through the President's garden and grounds, let us enter his palace, and survey its spacious courts, its gorgeous banquetting halls, its sumptuous drawing rooms, its glittering and dazzling saloons, with all their magnificent and sumptuous array of gold and silver, crimson and orange, blue and violet, screens of Ionic columns, marble mantels, with Italian black and gold fronts, gilt eagle cornices, rich cut glass and gilt chandeliers, suspended by beautiful Grecian chains, gilt eagle-head candelabras, French bronze gilt lamps with crystal globes, bronze and gilt French bracket lights, gilt framed mirrors of prodigious size, large Italian slab mantel glasses, French gilt bronze mantel time-pieces, mahogany gilt-mounted and rose-wood piano fortes, gilt-mounted bureaux, superb mahogany wardrobes, mahogany gilt bronze-mounted secretaries, damask, satin, and double silk window curtains, with gilded eagles, stars, and ornamental rays, royal Wilton and imperial Brussels and Saxon car-

pets, gilt and satin settees, sofas, bergères, divans, tabourets and French comfortables, elegant mahogany gilt eagle-mounted French bedsteads, gilt plateaus, gaudy artificial flowers, rich blue and gold bonbons, tambours, compotiers, ice-cream vases, splendid French China vases, olive boats, octagon bowls, silver tureens, boats, and baskets, of very rich work, golden goblets, table spoons, knives and forks, &c.

Sir, I shall detain you no longer with this enumeration of rich wares, for I am sure your patience would be severely tried were I to name even the tenth part of the curious, the magnificent, and the costly articles of luxury, of pride, and of show gathered into the palace by the various caterers who have been engaged in that most important branch of the *public service*. But I cannot forbear, Mr. Chairman, to read you a description of the great banqueting hall, commonly called the "East Room," taken from the United States Telegraph, (the Court Journal of the day,) December, 1829. This room had been furnished, for the first time about that period, by the predecessor of the present incumbent. It is 80 feet long, by 40 wide, and 22 feet high, and is finished with handsome stucco cornice. Now let us hear the description :

"The paper is of a *fine lemon color, with a rich cloth border*; four new mantels have also been placed in the room, of black marble, with Italian black and gold fronts; each fireplace has a handsome grate fixed; there were, however, in the house before new bronzed and steel fenders, and sets of brass fire-irons, and chimney hooks have been added; each mantel is furnished with a mirror, the plates of which measure 100 by 58 inches, framed in a very beautiful style; and a pair of rich ten light lamps, bronzed and gilt, with a row of drops around the fountain, and a pair of French China vases, richly gilt and painted, with glass shades and flowers. There are three very splendid gilt chandeliers, each for eighteen candles, the style of which is entirely new; the color of the glass and cutting perhaps *exceed any thing of the kind ever seen*. A small bronzed and gilt work, corresponding with the mantel lamps, the niches and recesses of which are supplied with eight French bronzed and gilt bracket lights, each for five candles. The carpet, which contains near 500 yards, is of fine Brussels, of fawn, blue, and yellow, with a red border. Under each chandelier is placed a round table of beautiful workmanship, with Italian black and gold slabs; on the centre table is placed a beautiful thin light lamp, supported by female figures; on the end tables are gilt astral lamps. Each pier is filled with a beautiful pier table, richly bronzed and gilt, corresponding with the round tables, each table having a lamp and pair of French China vases with flowers and shades agreeing with those on the mantels. The curtains are of blue and yellow moreen, with a gilded eagle, represented as holding up the drapery, which extends over the piers. On the cornice is a line of *gilded stars*, and over the semicircle of the door, besides *large gilded and ornamented rays*, are *24 gilded stars*, emblematic of the States, and corresponding with those on the cornice. *The stars have a very fine effect*. The sofas and chairs are covered with blue damask satin. All the furniture corresponds in color and style."

The Court Journal awards great merit for the taste displayed in the selection and disposition of the various articles, which, observes the Telegraph, "it is understood, *has received the entire approbation of the President*." After hearing this description, who can deny that this room, intended for the comfort of our democratic Chief Magistrate, is adorned with regal splendor far above any of the grand saloons at Buckingham Palace, Carlton House, or Windsor Castle? I ask you, sir, whether in furnishing the East Room with all its gilded eagles, gilded stars, gilded rays, golden slabs, gorgeous drapery, and dazzling foreign ornaments, a due regard has been paid "to the simplicity and purity of our institutions," or to the frugal, plain, unostentatious, and republican character of our people, who are represented in it? On the contrary, does not all this glittering display of costly finery, this blinding our eyes with the blaze of royal magnificence, approximate too closely the pride, pomp, and grandeur of those Governments in which *stars and garters* and *shining coronets* confer not only the means of luxurious enjoyment but of "civil superiority?" I cannot but admire and wonder at the great number of lamps, candles, and bracket lights, deemed necessary to illumine a single room in the President's palace. Let us see :

| | |
|---|-----|
| 4 "pair of rich ten light" mantel lamps, | 80 |
| 3 "very splendid gilt" chandeliers, each for eighteen candles, | 54 |
| 8 "French" bronzed and gilt bracket lights, each for five candles," | 40 |
| 1 "beautiful thin light lamp, supported by female figures," | 1 |
| 2 "gilt astral lamps, on the end tables," | 2 |
| 3 "lamps on pier tables," | 3 |
| | 180 |

Here, Mr. Chairman, our democratic President shines with the overpowering lustre of one hundred and eighty lights. Had you the eyes of the fabled Argus, he would blind them all. It really appears as if he had intended not only to bedizen the vision of his democratic friends, but to rival, by the fulgent beams of his palace, the "glorious king of day" himself. Brilliant and princely, however, as the East Room had been fitted up by the late President, it was destined to have its colors brightened, and its powers of attraction increased, by the exquisite taste of its present occupant—for, in an *official report* made in December last, the following important and gratifying information is communicated to Congress :

"The East Room in the President's mansion has been *greatly improved*, by being newly painted and papered with a rich, chaste, beautiful paper."

The former paper was a "*fine lemon color*," "with a rich cloth border," but Mr. Van Buren had doubtless been apprized, either by one of his sons, who at the time was on most familiar intercourse with, if not a resident at, the Court of St. James, or, perhaps, by a more formal communication through the Lord High Chamberlain of her Majesty's Household, that wall-paper of the "*lemon color*" had, during the progress of the last year, become unfashionable, and had not for several months been generally admitted as suitable for the parlors of the first grade of noblemen, much less for the royal banqueting saloons. Hence, Mr. Van Buren, as every person of rank and fashion, and more especially as every *gentleman born* was, by the rigid laws of fashionable life, bound to do, issued his royal mandate on the first day of July, in the year of

our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty-nine, that the "paper of the *lemon color*, with a rich cloth border," should be forthwith taken off the broad walls of the Eastern room, and that "a rich, chaste, and beautiful paper" should be substituted in its stead. That the first clause of this royal ordinance was faithfully executed, will distinctly appear from the following voucher:

"To taking off the paper of the East Room, as per agreement with C. F. Wood, sixteen dollars, Dr. \$16 00
 "July 1, 1839. Received payment of Wm. Noland, Esq. HENRY SNOWDEN, his x mark.
 "Witness, J. B. Rooker.
 "Certified by Charles F. Wood."

Endorsed—"Completing special repairs of the President's House, &c. \$16. Henry Snowden's receipt for work on the East Room of the President's House, July 1, 1839. No. 1."

An official voucher now in my hands will also show that sixty pieces of paper, at \$5 each, making \$300, were purchased from S. P. Franklin on the 20th August, 1839, for the East Room, and that the further sum of \$30 was paid to that gentleman for hanging the same. And thus, sir, it is made manifest that not less than three hundred and forty-six dollars of the money of your constituents and of my constituents have been expended during last summer for the gratification of a womanish but costly whim, in substituting "a rich, chaste, and beautiful" silver paper, with golden borders, for the unfashionable "lemon color, with a rich cloth border." But as a suitable recompense for this profligate waste of the public funds, the "hard handed democracy" of the country have been officially advised that "the East Room in the President's mansion has been greatly improved." They must therefore be content.

Mr. Chairman, there is a notable historical incident associated with this East Room, to which I may with propriety recur whilst we are within the room itself, and before we pass through the massive jappaned doors into the magnificent Elliptical Saloon, where I next propose to conduct you. That historical event refers to the celebrated "*East Room Letter*," addressed to the editor of the "*Richmond Enquirer*," and dated at Washington, January 1, 1827. Here is the letter:

"This being the day on which the President's House is thrown open to all visitors, I went, among others, to pay my respects to him, or rather, I should fairly confess, I went to see the East Room, for the furnishing of which we had voted twenty-five thousand dollars at the last session of Congress. I was anxious to see how that amount of furniture could be stowed away in a single room, and my curiosity was fully satisfied. It was truly a *gorgeous sight* to behold, but had too much the look of *regal magnificence* to be perfectly agreeable to my old republican feelings."

To establish the falsity of this celebrated letter, I will refer you to extracts from two distinguished public journals, one of them the "official organ" of General Jackson's Administration, and the other at that period in full communion with "the party:"

"It is well known that, *through Mr. Adam's aristocratic pride*, this elegant room (i. e. the *East Room*) in the President's House, was left *unfurnished*."—*U. S. Telegraph*, Aug. 1, 1829.

"The New York Courier and Enquirer of November, 1829, states as follows:

"The coalition papers tell us that the East Room is going to be furnished. This, at the best, is bad authority; but, if it be true, we are happy to hear it. The manner in which Mr. Clay's President kept the East Room was disrespectful to the office of President of the United States. Instead of its looking neat and clean, and tidy, and being decently furnished as the mansion of the President of a great republic ought to be, it was full of *cobwebs*, a few old chairs, lumbering benches, broken glass, and looked exactly like one of the apartments of Windsor Castle, Holyrood Palace, or the Tower of London, those appendages to kings and monarchs. The head of a republic ought to give an example of the *thriftness and virtuous habits of the people* who put him there. EVERY PLAIN REPUBLICAN, when visiting Washington, will now find a chair to sit down upon in the 'East Room.' They won't be kept standing upon their legs, as they do before kings and emperors, and as practised by Mr. Clay's President, till they are so tired as scarcely to know whether they have any legs to stand upon. Unless General Jackson put good, sound, substantial furniture into the 'East Room,' the REFORM is not complete in that quarter, and the People won't forgive him for neglecting it."

What a strange commentary do the gorgeous and dazzling garnishments of the "East Room" afford in regard to the remarks of the "Courier and Enquirer," which have just been read by the Clerk. "EVERY PLAIN REPUBLICAN," forsooth, "when visiting Washington, will now find a chair to sit down upon in the 'East Room.'" Ay, Sir, EVERY PLAIN REPUBLICAN will now find a set of chairs in that splendid and royal saloon, which took the round sum of SIX HUNDRED DOLLARS of the PEOPLE'S CASH to pay for. Is not that "sitting down" with a vengeance? "Mr. CLAY's President, (Mr. ADAMS) through *aristocratic pride*," kept the East Room "full of *cobwebs*, a few old chairs, lumbering benches, and broken glass." On the other hand, Martin Van Buren—plain, republican hard-handed-democratic-locofoco Martin Van Buren—has it now garnished with gold framed mirrors "as big as a barn-door," to behold his *plain republican self* in. What need he care if those mirrors have taken TWENTY-FOUR HUNDRED DOLLARS of the PEOPLE'S CASH to pay for them? Is not such democracy a burlesque on common sense and common decency? But, Mr. Chairman, I am not done with the "celebrated East Room letter." That letter was not only false, but was, immediately after its publication, known throughout the whole country to have been a sheer fabrication, "from beginning to end." For the sake of the author's reputation, it therefore became necessary that his name should be withheld from the People. The editor of the Richmond Enquirer, instead of exposing the base coin of falsehood, maintained the deep silence of the grave in regard to the writer of the letter during a period of almost four months; and it was not until after repeated goadings that he became restive and sore, and began to manifest a proper disposition to clear his own skirts of the forgery. He accordingly announced in the Richmond Enquirer of the 27th of April, 1827, in reply to an article in some other newspaper on the subject of the letter, that "the account to which the writer refers respecting the East Room was forwarded to us, as it pur-

ports, by one of the most intelligent and distinguished members of Congress." This "most intelligent and distinguished member of Congress" turned out to be THOMAS HART BENTON, who subsequently became still more distinguished as the author of the "*Gold Lumber*." I said that his "East Room letter" was false throughout, and that it was made up of the whole piece of cloth: for it appears, at the very time (1st January, 1827) that letter was written, describing the furniture of the East Room as gorgeous to a degree of "regal magnificence," the room had no furniture, excepting a few old chairs, lumbering benches, broken glass," and divers fraternities of cobwebs. Sir, I go for these old reminiscences, and I hold that, when "one of the most intelligent and distinguished members of Congress" will deliberately sit down in his chair and fabricate for publication a *wilful lie*, for the purpose of deceiving the People, he ought ever to be kept in fresh remembrance. His title should be branded deeply on his forehead as ever was the letter R on felon's cheek. Sir, Thomas H. Benton *begot that falsehood*—it was proved upon him; and though other matters on account of *youthful indiscretion* may be forgiven and forgotten, this base coinage he brought to his own door, and is and will be remembered by the People of the United States.

Having paid our respects to the "*East Room*," let us, Mr. Chairman, take a view of what is, at the present day, called the "*BLUE ELLIPTICAL SALOON*," though in former times it was known as the "*Green Circular Parlor*." This apartment is nearly oval in form, and is forty feet long by thirty wide. In its beautiful shape, rich French furniture, showy drapery, costly gilded ornaments, and general arrangements, the "*Blue Elliptical Saloon*" has frequently been pronounced, in the judgment of the best connoisseurs, the *choicest room* of the palace. It is believed to have been prepared and furnished very much after the style of the most brilliant drawing-rooms at the *Tuilleries*, *Fontainebleau*, *Neuilly*, and *St. Cloud*. To give you, sir, a proper idea of the "regal magnificence" of this saloon at this day, I will first enumerate some of the articles with which it had been furnished before Mr. Van Buren became its occupant, and shall then show that he expended, in "improving" the furniture of that room, during the first ten months of his presidency, the sum of \$1,805 55 of the PEOPLE'S CASH. Sir, NOT OF HIS OWN. The "*Blue Elliptical Saloon*," among the other furniture, had the following:

1 superb FRENCH GILT mantel time-piece, representing Minerva leaning on her buckler, on the face of which the clock is placed; the whole standing on a square bronze pedestal, adorned on three sides with military trophies in bas-relief. The entire work is bronzed, elegantly carved, and richly gilded.

2 large GILT FRAMED MIRRORS.

3 splendid GILT EAGLE CORNICES.

1 large glass and GILT chandelier of 30 lights, ornamented with female figures and a bust of Diana; the branches being embellished with a head of Minerva.

1 pair elegant bronzed and heavy gilt mantel branches, garnished with ivy leaves and female figures carrying trumpets.

4 BRONZE and GILT CANDELABRAS, supported by a figure standing on a round pedestal and bearing a palm-tree, with five lights.

1 pair of bronze and gilt andirons, with eagles in antique colors.

1 set of splendid PORCELAIN VASES, decorated with the rich landscape of Passey, embracing the mansion of Dr. Franklin, when he resided in France.

1 bust of Washington.

1 GILT CONSUL TABLE, with marble top.

3 sets of DOUBLE SILK window curtains.

24 elegant GILT and SATIN CHAIRS.

4 Do. do. SETTEES for recesses.

2 Do. do. SOFAS and PILLOWS.

2 Do. do. FIRE SCREENS.

1 large elliptical French carpet.

This carpet was very elegant, and cost 9,059 francs. It was of the most brilliant and dazzling colors; had a splendidly embroidered work in the centre, representing a *Bald Eagle*, "*large as life*," with a scroll in his beak, inscribed with "*E pluribus unum*," and with the usual accompaniment of arrows in his talons; while the flag of America, emblazoned by the stars and stripes, waved over his head.

I said, sir, I would show that Mr. Van Buren had expended \$1,805 55, within ten months after he had gone into possession, in making improvements in the "*Blue Elliptical Saloon*." I prove this expenditure by an original voucher, which I hold in my hand, dated December 12, 1837, containing the bill and receipt of Messrs. Patton & Co., New York, for materials, &c., furnished to improve the President's house. The entire bill, as receipted, is \$4,316 18; of that amount \$1,805 55 was for articles, &c. for this room, viz:

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|------------|
| "3 windows," (curtains) - | \$1,307 50 | Repairing and covering 2 sofas, - | 24 00 |
| SATIN MEDALLION, - | 176 37 | Do. do. 4 TABOURETS, - | 8 00 |
| Silk cord, - | 24 66 | Do. do. 2 screens, - | 4 00 |
| Plain satin, - | 38 12 | Do. do. 5 FOOTSTOOLS - | 6 25 |
| Galloon, - | 74 50 | Do. do. 4 SETS PILLOWS - | 16 00 |
| SILK TASSELS, - | 42 00 | Do. do. Music stool, - | 1 50 |
| Gimp, - | 54 65 | | |
| Repairing and covering 14 chairs, - | 24 00 | | |
| | | | \$1,805 55 |

Mr. Chairman how do you relish the the notion of voting away the HARD CASH of your constituents, of your farmers, mechanics, and poor laborers, for SILK TASSELS, GALLOON, GIMP, and

SATIN MEDALLION, to beautify and adorn the "BLUE ELLIPTICAL SALOON? Suppose, sir, after you shall have turned to the charming prairies of Illinois, some plain, honest, republican "Sucker" should inquire what use a real genuine hard-handed locofoco democrat like Mr. Van Buren can have for *silk covered pillows, footstools and TABOURETS* in the "Blue Elliptical Saloon?" How would you reply to that honest Sucker's interrogatory? Would'nt you acknowledge yourself fairly stumped? But suppose he would ask what sort of animals these TABOURETS, or TABBY-CATS, are? I will endeavor to tell him, for I have lately given some little attention to this curious department of natural history. The TABOURET is an article of furniture, which, in Europe and Asia, is only to be met with in the richest saloons of monarchs. It is a convex seat, without arms or back, and in form bearing a close resemblance to a Turkish standard, or the moon in her first quarter; is composed of GILT WOOD, cushioned and stuffed with very fine black horse hair, covered with crimson damask, figured satin, and garnished with silk lace, GOLD FRINGE TASSELS, TUFTS, and STARS. It is supported by an X. Even before the days of the Crusades, THE HONORS OF THE TABOURET were held in the highest esteem. This honor consisted in the distinguished privilege of sitting upon a TABOURET IN THE ROYAL PRESENCE. By long and well-established court ceremonial law in many monarchies, no individual in the kingdom is entitled to enjoy this high distinction, on *grand gala days*, save a DUTCHESS OF THE BLOOD ROYAL. In confirmation of what I have stated in regard to the importance ascribed to the "*honors of the tabouret*," I will read a sentence or two from a recent and very interesting work by Governor Cass, our distinguished minister at the Court of St. Cloud. The book is entitled "France, its King, Court, and Government." I read from page 84, London edition.

"Under the ancient *regime*, the right to have both folding-doors thrown open, OR TO SIT UPON A TABOURET, WHICH IS A CUSHIONED STOOL, WAS ONE OF THE GREATEST HONORS A SUBJECT COULD ASPIRE TO, AND EXCITED MORE SENSATION THAN MANY A POLITICAL EVENT AFFECTING THE PROSPERITY OF THE KINGDOM. On particular days the King dined in public, when the principal personages of the court and the kingdom were seen standing at his chair, holding plates and towels under their arms and in their hands," &c.

Mr. Chairman, I hesitate not to say that, if you inquire minutely into the history and uses of the tabouret, you cannot fail to discover that it has ever been regarded as among the indispensable *regalia* of a monarch, and is by many considered almost as essential to kingly paraphernalia as the royal jewels, the sceptre, the diadem, or even the crown itself. The four *tabourets* in the "Blue Elliptical Saloon" of the President's palace were procured from France, and cost 939 francs 8 centimes. Here, sir, is the bill transmitted to this country with the tabourets:

"Detail d'un Tabouret en X."

| | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|----|-------|--------|-----------------------------|----|-------|--------|
| Le bois dore | - | - | 125 00 | 1 1/2 Cordonet en soie | at | 75 | 1 40 |
| 1/2 Etoffe a dessin | at | 35 00 | 17 50 | 1 1/2 Fesarde 4 lignes | at | 1 00 | 1 85 |
| 2 Bordure trois pouces | at | 6 00 | 12 00 | 1 1/2 Franges en soie | at | 15 00 | 28 12 |
| 2 do 18 lignes | at | 3 00 | 6 00 | Facon et menues fournitures | | | 24 00 |
| 3 Pieces surfait | at | 2 50 | 1 65 | | | | |
| 1 Toile d'Embourrure | at | 75 | 75 | | | | 234 77 |
| 7 lbs. Crin noir d'En- | | | | | | | |
| chantillon | at | 2 20 | 15 40 | Les 4 tabourets en X | - | | 939 08 |
| 3/4 Toile douce | at | 1 80 | 1 10 | | | | |

Now, sir, I should like to hear the honest opinions not only of the plain, republican "Suckers," but also of the "Hoosiers," of the "Wolverines," and of the "Buckeyes," about these tabby-cats. Wont they think "*them animals rather dangerous critters*" to be kept snugly seated within the "Blue Elliptical Saloon? Wont they object against Mr. Van Buren paying away THEIR CASH for the purpose of dressing up these tabby-cats in new damask silk frocks? But I would also very much desire to learn the views of these plain republican "Suckers" in regard to three new window curtains, bought by our democratic President for the "Blue Elliptical Saloon." You will see by "the bill," that \$1,307 50 of the people's cash was paid for these three curtains—making just \$435 83 apiece. I am disposed to believe that the plain, republican "Suckers" will think \$435 83 is a little too much money to be laid out for "*fixing*" one window curtain. Why, sir, that sum would build three or four comfortable "Log Cabins," and finish them off completely, with puncheon floors, clap-board roofs, cobs, ribs, eave-bearers, butting-poles, weight-poles, and ridge-poles, and including cat and clay chimneys into the bargain, and would also leave a few dollars beside to treat the folks who came to the "*raisin*" with as much HARD-CHEER as they can stow away under the belts of their linsey-woolsey hunting-shirts.

But, sir, what will those plain, republican "Suckers" say when I suggest that Mr. Van Buren doubtless, in the opinion of the "*importers of French silks*," made money, or, to speak with more propriety, *saved* cash to the people by the purchase of these three window curtains at \$1,307 50?—for the curtains which now hang at the seven windows of the "East Room" required exactly \$3,875 35 of the PEOPLE'S MONEY, or the moderate sum of \$553 62 for each curtain. Do I startle your "old republican feelings?" Mr. Chairman, it rejoices my heart to behold that honest frown of disapprobation resting on your brow at the recital of this prodigal and lavish waste of the money of your constituents. As I like always to be armed with the proof of every important fact which I desire to bring before the country, I will present you, sir, the bill of items for the curtains in the East Room. They were purchased from the firm of L. Veron & Co. in Philadelphia. Here is the bill:

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|---|----------|--|------------|
| 216 yards long silk fringe | - | - | \$110 40 | A. Lejamber's bill of ORNAMENTS | 255 75 |
| 44 " heavy cord silk fringe | - | - | 121 00 | Putting up the curtains | 274 36 |
| 44 " " cotton | - | - | 16 72 | | 3,495 85 |
| 210 " embroidered eagle muslin | - | - | 352 80 | | 349 50 |
| 120 " satin border | - | - | 492 00 | Profit 10 per centum | 30 00 |
| 196 " yellow silk | - | - | 607 60 | Expenses of upholsterers in Washington | |
| 132 " blue silk | - | - | 377 52 | | |
| 167 " white silk | - | - | 517 74 | Cost of East Room curtains | \$3,575 25 |
| Mr. Nolen's bill for GILT RAYS | - | - | 70 00 | | |

I have no doubt that the more rich and fashionable portion of Mr. Van Buren's friends will urge in his defence that the curtains purchased for the "Blue Elliptical Saloon" are very cheap; that they are composed of the richest materials, and are in perfect harmony with all the gorgeous arrangements in this magnificent saloon. Whereas the curtains which were there at the retirement of General Jackson were *merely crimson damask double silks*, that had been bought from Mr. Perdreauville for the trifling sum of four hundred and fifty dollars, and were not deemed by fashionable gentlemen and ladies sufficiently splendid to suit the other drapery of the saloon. Whether this defence will be considered as good for \$1,307 50 of the *People's cash*, I leave the People themselves to determine.

We shall now, Mr. Chairman, take our leave of the "Blue Elliptical Saloon;" but before we pass out of the door, turn your eyes, and take a moment's survey of the "*tout ensemble*," not omitting the highly polished and beautiful marble mantel, with its superb but fantastic ornaments, and tell me whether this sumptuously garnished saloon bears the characteristics of an apartment intended for the accommodation of the CHIEF SERVANT of a plain, economical, hardy, and republican people? Or whether it does not more resemble the Audience Room of a Monarch, in which he receives his sleek and ribband-bedecked courtiers, as they present themselves with their humblest genuflexions and prostrations, crouching like fawning spaniels to the hand which has it in its power to throw them a bone?

On each side of the "Blue Elliptical Saloon" and communicating therewith by very large smoothly varnished doors, is a parallelogram drawing-room, of 36 by 22 feet. These apartments are called the "green" and "yellow" drawing-rooms, and, by some, are supposed to rival the "Saloon" in the splendor and richness of their drapery and other decorations, and with it form a suit of rooms that many of the inferior Monarchs of Europe would feel proud to possess. These three parlors were formerly used for the reception of company on a stated day (Wednesday) in every week, when the palace doors were thrown wide open for all the citizens of the Republic who were disposed to enter and pay their respects to the Chief Magistrate of the nation. But the good old usages and liberal practices of Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe, are no longer of authority at the palace; *economy, not of the People's cash but of the President's*, is now in that quarter the order of the day. Hence, instead of those old and well-appointed "*weekly*" visits and greetings, when all the People were at liberty to partake of the good cheer of the President's House, there has been substituted one cold, stiff, formal, and ceremonious assembly on the first day of every year. At this annual levee, notwithstanding its pomp and pageantry, no expense whatever is incurred by the President personally. No fruits, cake, wine, coffee, hard cider, or other refreshments of any kind are tendered to his guests. Indeed, it would militate against all the rules of court etiquette now established at the palace to permit "vulgar eating and drinking" on this GRAND GALA DAY. The only entertainment there served up consists in profound bows, stately promenades, formal civilities, ardent expressions of admiration for the pageant passing before your eyes, with anxious inquiries about the weather—all these good things go to make up what the fashionable people there assembled call the "*feast of reason and the flow of soul*." This admirable course levies no unwilling contributions on the "private funds" of the President, and, in that respect, squares with his economical notions to a T. The Marine Band, however, is always ordered from the Navy Yard, and stationed in the spacious front hall, from whence they swell the rich saloons of the palace with "Hail to the Chief," "Wha'll be King but Charlie," and other kindred airs, which ravish with delight the ears of warriors who have never smelt powder. *As the People's cash, and not his own*, pays for all the services of the "Marine Band," its employment at the palace does not conflict with the peculiar views of the President in regard to the obvious difference between *public and private economy*.

Mr. Chairman, a plain, sober-minded republican can have no love for the splendors of a monarch's court, much less can he admire the apish mimicry of royal ceremonies displayed with so much ostentation at the annual levee of the President. A plain republican beholds nothing in all those vain formalities which fairly and truly represents the hardy and simple character of the American people. *British noblemen* would doubtless look with gratification at the gorgeous pageant of foreign ambassadors, with their attaches bedecked in all their dazzling but grotesque national court costumes. Lordly aristocrats would take great delight in surveying the bright array of stars and ribbands, jewels and badges of honor, gold buttons and epaulets, that on those occasions cause the rich saloons of the President's palace to shine with redoubled brightness. They, too, would no doubt much admire the long lines of black and gilded coaches which fill the wide carriage-ways leading from the Ionic portico of the palace to the right and left huge iron portals which face the great avenue. But, sir, these gilded carriages, richly caparisoned horses, gaudy hammer-cloths, footmen in gold and crimson liveries, all the blaze of equipage, and all

the trappings of royalty, have no attractions for the eyes of plain, republican freemen. They know full well that all this finery was purchased of the coachmaker, the painter, the carver, the gilder, the harness-maker, and the tailor; and that the little-souled mortal who thus rages to outshine all others in externals—who would monopolize not only the luxuries of a palace, but all notice, all respect, and all consideration—would *also desire to wear a glittering coronet, and to lord it over his species.*" Our plain, republican citizens are too intelligent to look with approbation at a royal pageant that offends them with its glare; and they possess too much of the spirit of '76 not to despise the little aristocrat, who seems to think that the entire universe was made for him, and such as he, "to take their pastime in;" and who, by his imperious look, insolently asks—

"Have poor men souls? and are their bodies then
Of the same flesh and blood as gentlemen?"

At these "annual State levees," the great doors of the "East Room," "Blue Elliptical Saloon," "Green Drawing Room," and "Yellow Drawing Room," are thrown open at 12 o'clock "*precisely*" to the anxious feet of gaily apparelled noblemen, honorable men, gentlemen, and ladies, of all the nations and kingdoms of the earth, many of whom appear ambitiously intent upon securing an early recognition from the head of the mansion. The President, at the "same instant of time," assumes his station about four feet within the "Blue Elliptical Saloon," and facing the door which looks out upon the spacious front hall, but is separated from it, as before remarked, by a screen of Ionic columns. He is supported on the right and left by the Marshal of the District of Columbia, and by one of the high officers of the Government. The Marine Band having been assigned their position at the eastern end of the hall, with all their fine instruments in full tune, "at the same identical moment," strike up one of our most admired "national airs;" and forthwith a *current of life* flows in at the wide-spread outer door of the palace, and glides with the smoothness of music through the spacious hall, by the Ionic screen, into the royal presence. Here (to drop for a moment my liquid figure) each and every individual is presented and received with a gentle shake of the hand, and is greeted with that "smile eternal" which plays over the soft features of Mr. Van Buren, save when he calls to mind how confoundedly "*Old Tip*," chased, caught, and licked Proctor and Tecumseh. Immediately after the introduction or recognition, the current sets toward the "East Room," and thus this stream of living men and women continues to flow, and flow, and flow for about the space of three hours—the "DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENT" being the only orb around which all this pomp, pride, and parade revolve. To him all these lesser planets turn, "as the sunflower turns" to the sun, and feel their colors brightened when ~~gray~~ of favor or a "royal smile" falls upon them. But, amid this gorgeous pageant, I would ask, Mr. Chairman, where are the sympathies that beat in unison with the honest pulsations of the tenants of log cabins? What is there in this glare of rubies and diamonds, and gaudy court costumes, that can recall to the mind of an observer the unequal lot of the poor daily laborer, whose task is never fully ended until the sun retires behind the Western mountains? Can a single thought for the troubles and toils and cares of honest poverty abide one moment in an assembly like this—an assembly which the popular climate would chill into icy stiffness? The gales from the log cabins would come over it like the chilling blasts from the frozen regions of the poles, where the "genial beams of solar influence" cannot penetrate.

During the administration of John Q. Adams, I had frequently heard this gentleman much censured for the introduction of Court ceremonials at the palace; but, from full inquiry and investigation, I am satisfied that those charges were founded in error. The very first royal or Court ordinance in relation to the proper ceremonies to be observed at the President's levees which I have been able to discover was proclaimed during the next year after General Jackson had succeeded to the Presidency. It was in the form of an "*order*" issued by the Marshal of the District of Columbia. I will send it to the Clerk's table, sir, and have it read, for the benefit and admiration of all pure, hard-handed, locofoco democrats:

"THE PRESIDENT'S DRAWING-ROOM.—Wishing to preserve order, and afford every convenience in my power to the fellow citizens of the President of the United States who may wish to visit his drawing-rooms or levees, I deem it proper to promulgate the following regulations, to be observed on these occasions:

"Police officers will be stationed at the gates and front door of the Executive Mansion, to preserve order and enforce the following regulations:

- "1. All carriages will enter by the eastern and depart by the western gate.
- "2. None will be suffered to remain in the yard; when called for, they will enter the eastern gate, and if, on their arrival at the front door, their drivers and employers are not ready to depart, they will immediately drive out of the yard, and remain out until again called for by the POLICE OFFICERS.
- "3. No boys will be admitted unless specially introduced by their parents.

"JANUARY 21, 1830.

"TENCH RINGGOLD,
Marshal of the District of Columbia."

This ORDER, I presume, sir, is the germ of all the Court formalities that now obtain at the palace. But these Court ceremonies are offensive to the taste and feelings of plain republicans—they answer no good end; and I trust the day is not far remote when the President of the United States will discover that to obtain and retain the respect of the American People it will be necessary to *deserve* it; and especially that to secure their respect it will not be necessary to *practise* the airs and adopt the forms which prevail at the British Court.

Let us return, Mr. Chairman, to the "*locus in quo*," or rather "*locus criminis*"—the place where this crime (against the simplicity of republican manners) has been committed—the Green and Yellow Drawing-rooms. I have too wide a field, as yet, before me to consume much of the

time of this committee in attempting to describe the gorgeous splendor of the window curtains and other drapery; the dazzling magnificence of the large gilded mirrors, mantel glasses, chandeliers, candelabras, French bracket lights, and mantel ornaments; the smooth and beautiful Italian slab centre tables; the rich and luxurious damask satin-covered chairs, bergères, sofas, French-comfortables, Turkish ottomans and divans, and brilliant imperial carpets, and other shining garnishments with which these superb drawing-rooms are adorned. It may be sufficient to say that the lustre and elegance of their interior would no doubt dazzle, if they did not blind, the eyes of Slamm, Bang, and Ming, the celebrated locofoco rulers of Tammany Hall. The Green and Yellow Drawing-rooms have been greatly beautified and improved since the retirement of Gen. Jackson. I find amongst the vouchers of the Treasury Department a bill of C. Alexander, for materials, &c., for the President's House, from the 11th of March, 1837, till the 16th May, 1837, \$1,037 35; part of this amount, viz: \$355 68½, was for the Green Drawing-room. The latter sum, amongst other charges, includes one item for thirty pieces of SILVER PAPER, \$120, and one other item for 96 yards of green silk, \$108.

But, sir, without stopping to inquire how vastly that *silver paper and green silk* must have improved the Green Drawing room, I will proceed to read two other bills for more substantial, and not less ornamental improvements.

"The United States to P. VALDERON, for President's House. \$100
Received payment of T. L. SMITH, September 30, 1837. P. VALDERON.

(Voucher No. 37.)

The President's House Dr. to A. LEJAMBER.

6 FRENCH COMFORTABLES, made of extra materials, and extra covers - - - - - \$160
4 boxes, at \$2 50 - - - - - 10

Received payment in full.

A. LEJAMBER. \$170

(Voucher No. 8, embraced in abstract No. 1, of payments made by T. L. Smith, agent for purchasing furniture for President's House from April 15, 1837, to May 16, 1838.)

In the ninth century, the immortal Alfred sat on a three legged stool, and "swayed his sceptre o'er the English realm;" but Mr. Van Buren, "in this our day," is not content with a seat of such homely and rude construction. He must have "Turkish divans" and "French comfortableables." Thousands of the People's dollars have been lavishly expended for—

Gilt and damask satin covered Settees,
Gilt and damask satin covered Sofas,
Gilt and damask satin covered Bergères,
Gilt and damask satin covered Fauteails,
Gilt and damask satin covered Chairs,

Gilt and damask satin covered Ottomans,
Gilt and damask satin covered Tabourets,
Gilt and damask satin covered Music-stools,
Gilt and damask satin covered Foot-stools,
Gilt and damask satin covered Pillows.

Still Mr. Van Buren was not content; he longed for the "Turkish divan" and the "French comfortableable." A good locofoco democrat, methinks, might have been pretty well satisfied with a crimson damask sofa and a pillow of soft down encased in a silk cover. And a bulky alderman, it is said, after enjoying his turtle-soup, can snore away his six hours, at perfect peace with all mankind, by placing his corporation within the generous dimensions of a bergère. But neither the crimson damask sofa and soft down, silk covered pillow, nor the capacious bergère would content Mr. Van Buren. What was to be done? The ottoman has no back whereon a hard-handed democrat, wearied with the cares of State, can lean, and the tabouret is part and parcel of the *Court regalia*, and may be soiled by too frequent use; the music-stool and the foot-stool, albeit covered with damask satin, are too low for a favorable disposal of the extremities. What could be done, sir, in this dire emergency, but to pay down \$270 of the People's cash that Mr. Van Buren may enjoy the luxuries of the Turkish "divan" and the "French comfortableable, made of extra materials?" And as these fine articles were doubtless bought "dog cheap," and especially "as every dog has his day," in these "dog days," no good locofoco can ungenerously withhold from his hard-handed democratic friend the delights of a daily "*lounge*" on a "COMFORTABLE." But I opine, Mr. Chairman, that although many of these honest locofocos would be pleased to see AMERICAN COMFORTABLES introduced at the palace, they will hardly admit the propriety of the true representative of the real hard-handed democracy sending the cash of the People across the wide Atlantic for the purchase of "FRENCH comfortableables," at a time, too, when thousands of AMERICAN cabinet-makers and upholsterers, who are quite as ingenious and quite as handy, in their respective crafts, as the artisans of Paris and Lyons, are out of employment, for the want of a market for their beautiful fabrics.

I will not detain you, sir, longer in the Green and Yellow Drawing rooms than just to direct your eye in retiring from the latter, first to the elegant mahogany gilt-mounted piano forte, and then to the *heavy gilt bronze* mantel time-piece, representing Hannibal, the celebrated Carthaginian General at the battle of Cannæ.

There are no other apartments on the first floor of the palace excepting the "COURT LEVEE, OR BANQUETING ROOM," and the family dining room, with sundry store rooms, and PLATE and CHINA closets between them. I shall call your attention, Mr. Chairman, to the "COURT BANQUETING ROOM," but not until we shall first step to the left of the great entrance hall, that we may ascend the grand staircase covered with a rich Brussels carpet, in order to take a very cursory view of the interior arrangements on the second story of the palace. The apartment on

this story which has been most admired is denominated the "Ladies Circular Parlor," corresponding in form, lustre, and elegance, with the "Blue Elliptical Saloon" on the first story. This beautiful "parlor" was fitted up in handsome style by Mr. Adams, and was occupied by that President's family, during his term of office, as their company receiving room. Soon after Mr. Van Buren came into power, the "Ladies' Circular Parlor," as well as every other apartment in the palace, was ordained to accept a splendid outfit at the hands of the gilder, the painter, the carver, the upholsterer, and the importer of gold and silver paper, royal Wilton and imperial Saxon carpets, gilt rays, stars, fringe, tassels, *Fanny Kemble green glass finger cups* fancy toilet sets, and other *lovely foreign ornaments*. I discover, by a voucher now in my hand, that Mr. Van Buren, on the 12th day of December, 1837, paid \$1,041 of the People's cash for the embellishment of the "Ladies' Circular Parlor." This sum of \$1,041 is one of the charges in the large bill (\$4,316 08) of Messrs. Patten & Co. New York, and to which I before referred. I will at this favorable time present some other charges included in the bill of Messrs. Patten & Co. What do you think, Mr. Chairman, of the following specimens of locofoco democracy?

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|---|---|---------|
| <i>For President's Chamber.</i> | Making curtains and ORNAMENTS | - | - | - | \$57 50 |
| | SILK TASSELS - | - | - | - | 18 00 |
| <i>For President's Parlor.</i> | Satin Medallion | - | - | - | 68 00 |
| | Satin - | - | - | - | 30 62 |
| | Galloon - | - | - | - | 35 49 |
| | Cord - | - | - | - | 9 52 |
| | SILK TASSELS - | - | - | - | 12 50 |
| | Rosettes - | - | - | - | 2 00 |
| | Gimp - | - | - | - | 12 40 |
| <i>For Ladies' Room.</i> | Making curtains and ORNAMENTS | - | - | - | 51 00 |
| | TASSELS - | - | - | - | 18 00 |
| | CRIMSON TAFFETA - | - | - | - | 124 00 |
| <i>For Bedroom No. 1.</i> | Making curtains and ORNAMENTS | - | - | - | 57 50 |
| | SILK TASSELS - | - | - | - | 18 00 |
| <i>For Room No. 4.</i> | Making curtains and ORNAMENTS | - | - | - | 35 50 |
| | SILK TASSELS - | - | - | - | 12 00 |
| <i>For Room No. 6.</i> | Making curtains and ORNAMENTS | - | - | - | 37 75 |
| | SILK TASSELS - | - | - | - | 9 00 |
| <i>For Room No. 8.</i> | Making curtains and ORNAMENTS | - | - | - | 53 25 |
| | Tassels - | - | - | - | 18 00 |
| <i>For Bell Pulls.</i> | Silk Cork | - | - | - | 59 63 |
| | TASSELS - | - | - | - | 42 00 |
| | ROSETTES - | - | - | - | 5 00 |

I am disposed to believe, Mr. Chairman, that the present occupant of the palace is not a "real genuine" locofoco, hard-handed democrat. He can't have the "right stripe." You may depend upon it something must be out of gear. Why, sir, he loves tassels, rosettes, and girlish finery almost as much as a real "Bank Whig" loves "hard cider." By the act of the 3d of March, 1837, Congress appropriated twenty thousand dollars "for furniture of the President's House." I quote the language of the law, "for FURNITURE of the President's House." Now, I find the entire bill of Messrs. Patten & Co. included in the "Abstract of payments made by Thomas L. Smith, agent for purchasing furniture for the President's House, from 15th April, 1837, to 16th May, 1838." I would, therefore, respectfully inquire whether "*silk tassels and rosettes*" are considered household furniture, in the legitimate democratic meaning of the word? I ask, sir, whether "*silk tassels and rosettes*" can be democratically inventoried as part and parcel of the household furniture of a hard-handed locofoco? Are "*silk tassels and rosettes*" hereafter to be written down, deemed, and taken in the same category with frying pans, oaken chests, chaff-bags, and crout tubs? As well might the honest citizen of Tulpehocken valley, who garnishes his 8 by 10 looking glass with a string of blue-jay, yellow-hammer, whittaker, and mocking-bird eggs, call those speckled eggs household furniture, and formally bequeath them, when he is about to take leave of plantations and speckled eggs, by his will, written or nuncupative. Sir, this would be too bad for a Christian country. But this is not all, for in the same "Abstract" of payments made by T. L. Smith, the following bill is also included:

"WASHINGTON, AUGUST 23, 1837.

The United States Government for President's House,
To Augt. F. Cammeyer, Dr.

453 Broadway, New York.

for GOLD LEAF, GILDING MATERIALS, labor, and expenses to the President's House - \$2,000 00
August 25, received payment in full of T. L. Smith.

AUGT. F. CAMMEYER."

Do you suppose, Mr. Chairman, that a plain, unsophisticated locofoco can stand this? Will he agree that Martin Van Buren acted fairly by paying out money which had been appropriated by law for "FURNITURE for the President's House," in buying GOLD LEAF and GILDING MATERIALS, and afterwards "whipping the Devil round the stump" by calling GOLD LEAF and GILDING materials household furniture? No, sir, he will not. The genuine

locofoco is too honest for that. Some few of them may, perhaps, be persuaded to admit that "*Silk Tassels and Rosettes*" are part and parcel of an *orthodox* schedule of democratic household furniture, but I aver that the application of red hot pincers, racks, gibbets, bowstrings, chains, and molten lead, cannot induce one of them to acknowledge that GOLD LEAF and GILDING MATERIALS may be legitimately inserted in the same schedule.

But the "end is not yet." I have before me, Mr. Chairman, the original bill (duly receipted) of C. H. & J. F. White for sundry "FRENCH BEDSTEADS," "*Marble-top Washstands*," "*Dining-room Commode with statuary Marble top*," "*Dressing Bureaus*," and other upholstery, bought August 10, 1837, for the sum of \$1,599 50 of the People's cash. These articles may be denominated "house-hold furniture" in the proper and true understanding of the terms. But, sir, I protest against expending the money of my constituents for elegant FRENCH BEDSTEADS. Must the AMERICAN *oak*, and *hickory*, and *cherry*, and *walnut*, and *maple*, that admits of "smoothest stain," stand neglected in the forests, for the GILT ROSEWOOD, *sandal*, *ebony*, *box*, and *mahogany* of France, and the far off "*Isles of the sea*?" Shall the People's money be shipped "across the ocean" by the People's *chief servant* to support FOREIGN MECHANICS, whilst OUR OWN "CUNNING WORKMEN" almost perish for lack of bread? Shall that "bread be withheld from the mouth of honest labor" at home, but lavished upon the subjects of kings abroad? Why was Mr. Van Buren so anxious to possess an elegant FRENCH BEDSTEAD? Does he desire to have the *trimmings* of a "CROWN BED" also? Besides the "Ladies' Circular Parlor," there are twelve commodious apartments on the second story of the palace—one of which is occupied by the President as an "office." The term "office," however, has been proscribed by the "COURT CIRCLES" as a *vulgar noun*, and hence the "office" room is designated at the palace by the higher sounding and tinkling name of "THE PRESIDENT'S AUDIENCE CHAMBER." Hard by the "President's Audience Chamber" is the "ANTE-ROOM," into which all visitors are conducted by a richly attired *English palace servant to wait* until the Democratic President shall signify his pleasure that they may be introduced to "*the presence*." I have heard a gentleman complain that the "Ante-Room" had not been provided with a large mirror, by the aid of which fashionable ladies might properly adjust their "bonnets and curls;" and before which, I presume, spruce courtiers who visit the palace could "*practise in making up their face for the day*." In relation to this subject, I cannot forbear to call your attention, Mr. Chairman, to a short passage in the 57th No. of the book, London edition, of the writings of the distinguished Archbishop Erasmus. He is giving "*directions to a young man how to conduct himself at Court*."

"As you are now going to live at Court," (says Erasmus,) "I advise you, in the first place, never to repose the smallest confidence in any man there who professes himself your friend, though he may smile upon you, and embrace you, and promise you; ay, and confirm his promise with an oath. *Believe no man there a sincere friend to you; and do you take care to be a sincere friend to no man.* Nevertheless, you MUST PRETEND TO LOVE ALL you see, and show the utmost suavity of manners and attentions to every individual. These attentions cost you not a farthing; therefore, you may be as lavish of them as you please. *Pay your salutations with the softest smiles on your countenance, shake hands with the appearance of most ardent cordiality, bow and give way to all, stand cap in hand, address every body by their titles of honor, praise without bounds, and promise most liberally.*

"I would have you every morning, before you go to the LEVEE, practise, in making up your face for the day, at your looking-glass at home, that it may be ready to assume any part in the farce, and that *no glimpse of your real thoughts and feelings may appear.* You must study your gestures carefully at home, that in the acting of the day your countenance, person, and conversation may all correspond, and assist each other in keeping up your character at the Court masquerade.

"These are the elements of the courtier's philosophy, in learning which, no man can be an apt scholar unless he first of all divests himself of all sense of shame, and, leaving his natural face at home, puts on a *vizor*, and wears it constantly too. In the next place, get scent of the various cabal and parties of the Court; but be not in a hurry to attach yourself to any of them till you have duly reconnoitred. When you have found out who is the King's favorite, you must not scruple to flatter him so long as he is in favor with the god of your idolatry.

"The god himself, to be sure, will require the main efforts of your skill. As often as you happen to be in THE PRESENCE, you must exhibit a face of apparently honest delight, as if you were transported with the privilege of being so near the ROYAL PERSON: When once you have observed what he likes and dislikes, your business is done."

Erasmus proceeds to counsel his Court pupil, "to pay more court to ENEMIES THAN FRIENDS, THAT HE MAY TURN THEIR HEARTS, AND BRING THEM OVER TO HIS SIDE."

The Archbishop, sir, was deeply read in the book of Courts, of human nature, and the world, and drew his picture "from the life." And I appeal to the honorable gentlemen who represent the "Palmetto State" on this floor, to say whether the present incumbent of the palace is not the very character which Erasmus ironically counsels his student to become. Let those gentlemen peruse the paragraphs which have just been read, and then let them burnish up their reminiscences of General Jackson's administration, and they cannot fail to recall to mind the name of his distinguished "Court favorite," whose will was omnipotent, even to "*the dissolution of a cabinet*." And they will also doubtless remember the smooth, nimble courtier, who,

"Instead of mounting barbed steed,
To fright the souls of fearful adversaries,"

capered in the palace saloons; and, after he had his cue, roused the vengeance of "the god of his (pretended) idolatry" against the then Vice President of the United States, and then hied away "to carry party considerations, to urge party merits, and to solicit party favors at the foot of the British throne;" and who has, since that period, paid "*more court to ENEMIES than friends, and thus turned their hearts and brought them over to his side.*"

I have also heard some persons affirm, in regard to the "Ante-Room," that it had not a sufficient number of *chairs* to accommodate the visitors *there at times kept in waiting*. I am satisfied, however, that the President cannot be aware of the fact, or he would have ordered for this room a dozen or two *silk damasks*, or *bambop canes* from the other apartments of the palace, from whence their removal would hardly have been recognised.

Democratic Presidents, Mr. Chairman, sometimes get tired of their furniture. Some change, perhaps, has taken place in the fashion, and then, forthwith, it becomes "old and decayed" furniture, and they send it off to auction and sell it for a whistle. At least six different sales of "old" or *unfashionable* furniture have been held within the last seven years, viz:

| | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|---|---|---|---|---|----------|
| 5th December, 1833. | Gross proceeds | - | - | - | - | - | \$636 92 |
| 7th " " | " " " | - | - | - | - | - | 3,831 23 |
| 23d " " | " " " | - | - | - | - | - | 53 55 |
| 1st " 1834 | " " " | - | - | - | - | - | 200 50 |
| 10th March 1835 | " " " | - | - | - | - | - | 190 00 |
| 23d November, 1837. | " " " | - | - | - | - | - | 1,078 71 |

5,990 92

Commissions and other expenses - - - - - 310 52

Nett proceeds of sales - - - - - \$5,680 40

After all, sir, it may be better occasionally to dispose of the *surplus* furniture of the palace, otherwise its rich saloons would soon resemble an auctioneer's room at Bishopsgate, to which noblemen, impoverished by their vices, order the furniture of their castles, for the purpose of "raising the wind."

I shall not detain the committee, Mr. Chairman, by going over the same "eternal round" of elegant and costly furniture with which the apartments on the second story of the palace abound. I must not, however, omit to name the ostrich egg mantel ornament on silver stands, and the superb imperial and royal Wilton, Brussels, and Saxon carpets; some of which, it is said, are deep enough for a good locofoco democrat to bury his foot in as he walks over them. Let me refer you, sir, to three or four of the carpet bills:

NEW YORK, July 3, 1837.

The President of the United States, by T. L. Smith, bought of Joseph Lowe, IMPORTER OF ENGLISH carpets, Oil Cloths, &c., 333 Broadway, corner of Anthony street.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------|
| 98 yards <i>Brussels</i> body, a 18s. | - | - | - | - | - | - | \$220 50 |
| 23½ do. do. border, a 18 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 52 88 |
| 99 do. do. body, a 18 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 222 75 |
| 23 do. do. border, a 18 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 51 75 |
| 3 <i>Imperial</i> rugs, ladies' room and 2 chambers, a \$25 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 75 00 |

\$622 88

Correct as regards quantities. September 19, 1837.

ED. BURKE.

Received payment.

JOSEPH LOWE."

"Martin Van Buren, President U. S., bought of W. W. Chester & Co., 191 Broadway.

| | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|-------|
| 1837, June 29, 170½ yards <i>Saxony</i> carpeting, a \$4 | - | - | - | - | - | - | \$682 |
| 1 rug to match | - | - | - | - | - | - | 35 |
| July 31, 2 rugs, a 25 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 50 |

767

By remnants, say 1 yard, returned - - - - - 4

\$763

20th September, 1837. Correct.

ED. BURKE.

Received payment of T. L. Smith,

W. W. CHESTER & CO."

NEW YORK, June 7, 1837.

Major Smith, for the President's House, Washington, bought of T. L. Chester.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------|
| 429½ yards <i>Brussels</i> carpeting a 17s. 2p. | - | - | - | - | - | - | \$912 16 |
| 145¾ do. 5-8 wide bordering, a 14s. 2p. | - | - | - | - | - | - | 257 43 |
| 30¾ do. do. a 17s. 2p. | - | - | - | - | - | - | 65 61 |
| 17¾ do. 4-4 ROYAL WALTON, a 32s. 2p. | - | - | - | - | - | - | 69 50 |
| 24½ do. 7-8 do. do. a 28s. | - | - | - | - | - | - | 85 75 |

\$1,390 45

20th September, 1837. Correct.

ED. BURKE.

Received payment.

T. L. CHESTER, per WM. HENRY CHESTER."

NEW YORK, June 7, 1837.

T. L. Smith, agent, bought of Webb & Tenson, IMPORTERS of Carpeting, Floor Cloths, Hearth Rugs, &c., 177, Broadway.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|------|------------|-------------------|--------|---|---|---|---|---|----------|
| 107½ | 226 yards | Wilton carpeting, | a 24s. | - | - | - | - | - | \$678 00 |
| 118½ | do. | do. | a 22 | - | - | - | - | - | 267 44 |
| 97½ | do. | Brussels do. | a 17 | - | - | - | - | - | 233 75 |
| 110 | do. | do. | do. | - | - | - | - | - | 24 00 |
| 1 | hearth rug | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 28 00 |
| 1 | do. | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 43 29 |
| 20½ | yards | Brussels | - | - | - | - | - | - | |

\$1,274 48

Received payment,

WEBB & TENSION."

I have also before me, Mr. Chairman, other *official vouchers*, duly receipted, for the following carpeting, purchased for the President's palace since the *Reformers* came into power :

From Lewis Veron & Co.

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|----------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|------------|
| 515 yards | IMPERIAL WILTON | - | - | - | - | - | - | \$1,545 00 |
| 66 do. | IMPERIAL SAXONS | - | - | - | - | - | - | 214 50 |
| 26½ do. | 4-4 wide for stairs | - | - | - | - | - | - | 105 00 |
| | Blue cloth for do | - | - | - | - | - | - | 19 12 |
| 107 do. | Brussels carpet and border | - | - | - | - | - | - | 214 00 |
| 1 | hearth rug to match | - | - | - | - | - | - | 25 00 |
| 498 yards | Brussels carpet and border | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1,058 25 |
| 4 | Imperial rugs | - | - | - | - | - | - | 68 00 |
| | Oil cloth | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1,200 00 |

\$4,448 77

Here, sir, we have the sum of \$8,499 68 of the people's cash paid by the "*Retrenching Reformers*" for FOREIGN carpets and oil cloths to adorn the palace. Now let me refer you to the 2d section of the act of Congress, passed the 22d of May, 1826. It is in these words :

"That all furniture purchased for the use of the President's House shall be, as far as practicable, of AMERICAN OR DOMESTIC MANUFACTURE."

Was it not "*practicable*" to obtain AMERICAN or DOMESTIC carpeting "for the use of the President's House?" No gentlemen dare affirm that. Then why did Mr. Van Buren *violate the law* in purchasing FOREIGN carpets? Are there no carpets made in the United States of texture firm enough, and of colors sufficiently gaudy, to please the eye of a democratic President? Are AMERICAN weavers, and dyers, and manufacturers too dull and too stupid to make a decent Republican carpet? Is American wool too coarse or too fine—too long or too short, sir, that AMERICAN mechanics cannot form a carpet out of it genteel enough for the feet of Martin Van Buren to soil? Why does he prefer ROYAL AND IMPERIAL WILTONS to the fabrics of *his own countrymen*? Has he no American patriotism to call to his aid, and to shield American mechanics from this direct insult to their skill? Can he not appreciate the feelings of honest pride, that would swell with delight the heart of every true born son of America, at beholding the floors and the walls in the saloons of an American President furnished with plain, substantial, American manufactures? Is this the policy that Mr. Van Buren proposes by which we are to protect *domestic industry* from *foreign competition*? Will he adopt the strange mode of conferring benefits on American artisans by transporting their money to reward the artisans of *England, France, Belgium, and Saxony*? What will the American wool grower say to this plan? How will the American weaver relish that? To correct and to punish this outrage against American skill and American industry, I rely with full confidence on the friends and patrons of American manufacturers and mechanics.

With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I will now again conduct you to the first story of the palace, where we shall enter the great "Court Banqueting room," in which I can promise you a sight that will be "good for sore eyes." It is a genuine locofoco's dinner table—set out, arranged in order, and duly prepared to receive the Court guests. In the first place, however, I must inform you that this table is not provided with those old and unfashionable dishes, "*hog and hominy*," "*fried meat and gravy*," "*schmitz, knep, and sourcrout*," with a mug of "*hard cider*." No, sir, no. All these substantial preparations are looked upon by *gourmands, French cooks, and locofoco Presidents* as exceedingly vulgar, and fit only to set before "*Bank Whigs*," and men (as the Globe eloquently expresses it) "*who adopt the maxims and principles of COBBLERS and TINKERS*." But the true orthodox, democratic viands, with which a genuine locofoco furnishes his dinner table, consists in *massive gold plate and French sterling silver services, blue and gold French tambours, compotiers on feet, stands for bonbons, with three stages, gilded French plateaus, garnished with mirrors and garlands, and gaudy artificial flowers*. During the apostolic days, the saints were commanded to "eat what was set before them, asking no questions"—but if any good Christian man should, by mistake, find his way to a table thus furnished, and should incline to obey the precept according to its letter, he would certainly have

hard fare of it. He might perhaps sustain famishing humanity by browsing on artificial flow-ers and wreaths, or, peradventure, by touching with the tongue the saccharine compotiers and bonbons, somewhat after the manner of the very commendable usage said to have prevailed at an early day among the inhabitants of Kinderhook, of suspending by a cord a large lump of sugar immediately over the centre of the table, so that it might swing round to the guests alternately. Albeit, sir, there is no food for the palate placed upon this locofoco's table, there is a feast of gold for the eye that would have satiated King Midas himself. And although the wood of several large forests was not cut down to dress the victuals for this Tamerlane banquet, yet it required the enormous sum of ELEVEN THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED AND NINETY-ONE DOLLARS AND THIRY-TWO CENTS OF THE PEOPLE'S CASH TO BUY THE TABLE "FURNITURE."

You seem amazed, Mr. Chairman. Do not believe that I speak not the "words of truth and soberness." I have now in my hands, sir, the "*official vouchers*," which show the expenditure of every dollar of that large sum, and that the whole amount thereof, with the exception of \$1,125, was expended since the days of the *plain, frugal, economical, republican, retrenching reformation* of Jackson and Van Buren commenced. And I here, in my place, demand, in the name of my constituents, that the Committee on the Expenditures on the Public Buildings make a report to this House, and communicate copies, not only of the vouchers on this subject, but all the vouchers in relation to expenditures for the President's House, furniture, and grounds; that they may be all spread before the people in an "*official form*." This everlasting leakage from the people's strong box must be stanchd.

But I will exhibit to the committee the various bills which form the aggregate of \$11,191 32 for the table service of the democratic President.

I will, in the first place, bring to the notice of the committee the bill for the French STERLING SILVER PLATE and GILT DESSERT SET, bought from a RUSSIAN NOBLEMAN, DE M. LE GENERAL BARON DE TUYLL, *resident minister of his MAJESTY the EMPEROR of RUSSIA at Lisbon*, for the sum of *four thousand three hundred and eight dollars and eighty-two cents*.

The silver plate consists of SOUP TUREENS, SAUCE BOATS, PLATES, *diverses grandeurs*, BOTTLE STANDS, SOUP LADLES, &c. &c. &c., *three hundred and thirty-eight pieces*.

The gilt dessert set is composed of TABLE SPOONS, SWEETMEAT SPOONS, TEA OR COFFEE SPOONS, KNIVES, FORKS, &c. &c., *one hundred and forty pieces*.

The following receipts are endorsed on the bill for the silver plate and gilt service.

"Received, June 29, 1833, four thousand three hundred and eight dollars eighty-two cents, being in full for the within service of plate. GEO. W. SOUTH."

"I certify that I have received into the President's House all the articles contained in the within service, and they are intended for the use of the President's House. J. BOULANGER."

"Washington, July 1, 1833.

It may be proper to remark that *pure gold* is generally considered too ductile and soft to manufacture into knives, forks, and other utensils, which require some degree of firmness or want of pliability. The gilt or gold service, therefore, used in the palaces of kings and at the castles of wealthy noblemen in Europe, is composed of a slight substratum of silver, thickly plated or overlaid with pure gold. And hence, I presume, the gilt service of the President was manufactured after the same manner. No honest democrat, however, by taking up the various articles of which it consists, would be led to doubt a moment that they are made of gold, without any alloy. They *may be pure gold*, though I am inclined to believe otherwise, inasmuch as they were procured from one of the great nobles of the Russian Empire.

Mr. Chairman, in my opinion, it is time the people of the United States should know that their money goes to buy for their plain hard-handed democratic President, knives, forks, and spoons of gold, that he may dine in the style of the monarchs of Europe. [Mr. WADDY THOMPSON. No wonder. This, you know, is a gold and silver Administration.] The fact, however, is impudently denied, not only by Mr. Van Buren's "*organ*," the Globe, but by all the locofoco papers throughout the country. When a certain lawyer, in Columbus, Ohio, told a farmer in his neighborhood that the President had a dinner service of gold, the locofoco paper published in that place, and called the "*Ohio Statesman*," made so fierce an attack upon him that the poor man was frightened, and actually retracted the statement—though it was as true as preaching. The editor of that journal, after thus obtaining a triumph over truth, proceeds in one of his late papers to make the "*amende honorable*." Please, sir, to notice the cool audacity of the fellow:

"A week or two since, we alluded in our paper to a Whig attorney of this city, that should have attempted to impose on an old farmer, by telling him that Mr. Van Buren eat off of gold plates, and used a gold knife and fork. We felt indignant that any one whom we held in high estimation, personally, should have descended to such a mode of electioneering, NOT THAT ANY ONE WOULD BELIEVE IT, but that any one should resort to such acts. We were, however, gratified by learning from the gentleman implicated that he was misunderstood, and of course we did him injustice, and it gives us pleasure to be thus able publicly to say so. We should have made this statement earlier, but we were anxious to see all parties before we did so."

Now, sir, I would advise this Whig lawyer not to be quite so timid hereafter as to retract statements based upon substantial facts. And I would further counsel him to visit the farmer with whom he held the conversation about the gold knives and forks of the President, and tell him the whole truth in relation to that matter; for I can assure this honest Whig lawyer that the gold service story is a hundred fold worse than he had any conception of. I do not know that

the rich gold and silver service is shown on all occasions; probably it is only when the *élite* are invited. But let any gentleman go to the palace when our *now* well-beloved cousin from South Carolina, whom the "Official Organ" *formerly* delighted to call John *Catiline* Calhoun, is at the banquet, and then the gold service in all its democratic lustre will be presented to his admiring eyes! Oh! sir, how delightful it must be to a real genuine locofoco to eat his *paté de foie gras, dinde desossé, and salade à la volaille* from a SILVER PLATE with a GOLDEN KNIFE AND FORK. And how exquisite to sip with a GOLDEN SPOON his *soupe à la Reine* from a SILVER TUREEN. It almost "makes my mouth water" to talk about it.

I will in the next place call the attention of the committee to the bill for the *splendid French China* for dinner service, and the elegant dessert set of blue and gold, with eagle; all MADE TO ORDER in France, and imported by Lewis Veron & Co., celebrated dealers in Faray China, &c. Philadelphia.

THE SET OF FRENCH CHINA for dinner service has *four hundred and forty pieces*, consisting of *olive boats, octagon salad bowls, pickle shells, long fish dishes, &c. &c.*, and cost one thousand dollars.

THE DESSERT SET, *blue and gold, with eagle*, composed of *four hundred and twelve pieces*, including six stands for BONBONS, with three stages; EIGHT TAMBOURS, with three stages; TWELVE SWEETMEAT COMPOTIERS, on feet; EIGHT COMPOTIERS, on feet; SIX LARGE FRUIT BASKETS, on feet; FOUR ICE-CREAM VASES and Covers, with inside Bowls; FIVE DOZEN GREEK-FORM CUPS and SAUCERS, &c. &c., cost one thousand five hundred dollars.

Mr. Chairman, don't you think that one of your plain republican "*Suckers*" would feel "kinder queer like" to be placed at the President's table, before these democratic "Tambours with three stages," and "Compotiers on feet!" Why, sir, he would almost imagine that he had suddenly been translated to the *salle à festin en maison royale* of Louis Philippe, King of the French. I have no doubt that some of my constituents would much rather face the grizzly bear, on the Appalachian mountains, than sit down before these "Tambours with three stages," and "Compotiers on feet," for *five consecutive hours*—the period usually required by Kings and democratic Presidents to masticate a state dinner.

The next piece of democratic "furniture" on the President's table to which I would invite your very particular attention is the "*Sourtout*," or bronze gilded Plateau, a large ornamented or pictured tray, which stands on the centre of the table. The Plateau, with the richly-gilded baskets, tripods, and Etruscan vases which accompany it, cost in Paris 6,000 francs, or \$1,125; and is the only piece of table "furniture" which has not been purchased since the democratic days of retrenchment and reform. Some four or five months after Mr. Van Buren took possession of the palace, he paid seventy-five dollars of the People's cash to Mr. Zachariah Nicholas for dressing up the Plateau, and it now looks quite new. It is composed of seven parts, measures thirteen feet six inches in length and two feet in width, and is ornamented with *mirrors*. It is also handsomely carved and gilded, with wreaths of fruits and vines; also with figures representing Bacchus and the Bacchantes, and pedestals upon which there are sixteen figures holding crowns to receive the lights, and sixteen cups to change them at pleasure. Accompanying the Plateau are two Etruscan Vases, gilded and garnished with flowers; also, two richly-gilded tripods, copied from antique patterns; also, three baskets, richly gilded, each with three figures upon a round stand, embellished with ivy and lyre-formed leaves, for six lights each, ornamented with flowers.

It does appear to me, sir, that the Plateau, with its fine *mirrors*, in which the honest, hard-handed locofoco democrats *can look at themselves*, almost every moment, during the formal progress of a court banquet, would be regarded even by a Bank whig as a pretty formidable article of dinner furniture.

Having disposed of the *pictured tray*, Mr. Chairman, I will direct your attention for a few minutes to the magnificent set of Table Glass, contained in three several bills. The first bill is for Champagne Glasses, Cigarets, Goblets, Cordials, Water Bottles, &c. bought from Messrs. Lewis Veron & Co. for nine hundred and twenty-four dollars. The second bill is for richest cut Tumblers, cut Centre Bowls and Stands, cut Floating Island Dishes, cut Pitchers, &c., purchased from Bakewell & Co. for fourteen hundred and fifty-one dollars and seventy-five cents. The third bill I will give you entire.

"NEW YORK, JUNE 8, 1837.

Col. T. L. Smith for sundry articles for President's House.

Bought of James P. Drummond, No. 47 Maiden Lane, between William and Nassau streets, IMPORTER of and dealer in China, Glass, and Earthenware, wholesale and retail—

| | | | |
|--|---------|--|--------|
| 6 quart and 12 pint, all <i>flute</i> , Decanters, | | 18 pint Water Bottles, flint and flint | 20 00 |
| cone stoppers, barrel shape, \$20 | \$84 00 | 2 Casks | 75 |
| 6 doz. <i>Claret Wines</i> , cut pillar stem, \$7 | 42 00 | | |
| 6 do GREEN FINGER CUPS, \$3 $\frac{1}{2}$ | 22 00 | | 240 75 |
| 6 do CUT WINE COOLERS, \$9 | 54 00 | Bottles returned | 20 00 |
| 2 do cut Champs, \$9 | 18 00 | | |

\$220 75

Duplicate.

Received payment.

JAS. P. DRUMMOND."

Mr. Chairman, these three bills for table glass make, together, the clever sum of \$2,596 50—an amount, I should suppose, sufficiently large to purchase the most democratic set of table glass in America. What, sir, will the honest locofoco say to Mr. Van Buren for spending the People's cash in FOREIGN FANNY KEMBLE GREEN FINGER CUPS, in which to wash his pretty tapering, soft, white, lily fingers, after dining on fricandeau de veau and omelette soufflé? How will the friends of temperance—the real totallers—relish the foreign “CUT WINE COOLERS” and the “BARREL-SHAPE FLUTE DECANTERS WITH CONE STOPPERS?”

I will now, sir, present you with a receipt for another ornament found on Mr. Van Buren's dinner table, that *tells* much, very much, sir, in regard to the true character of his democracy:

“Received, Baltimore, 14th November, 1837, of T. L. Smith, Esq. *one hundred dollars*, in full for a set of ARTIFICIAL FLOWERS FOR THE PRESIDENT'S TABLE.

“100 dollars.

JOHN THOMAS.”

I am willing to concede that the expenditure of \$100 is, in itself, a very small matter. The question, however, is not *how much cash* was paid by Mr. Van Buren for the bunch of ARTIFICIAL FLOWERS which decorates his table, but whether the People's money shall be expended for such aristocratic French finery? and whether Mr. Van Buren, who has been raised to the most exalted station on the earth, and whose example upon society must necessarily have a most powerful and extensive influence, shall, by the introduction of foreign gew-gaws into the house of the American People, contribute to corrupt the plain, unostentatious, and republican manners of our people, by creating vain desires for external show and for foolish displays of splendor, which are not congenial with our frugal habits? The influence of this example has already had a most injurious tendency within the District of Columbia, where many men are now found vying with each other to make a splendid appearance, even above their rank and means of support. I will give you an instance or two. Mr. F. P. Blair, the humble editor of Martin Van Buren's “Official Organ,” came to this city some ten years ago a plain, simple republican in his manners and style of living, having been brought up and educated with all the domestic and economical maxims of the hardy and frugal Western country. For some years after his arrival, he was content to dwell in a comfortable house of fifteen feet front, furnished in a plain, substantial way; but, behold the charm of Executive manners! How altered the man! He now aims at rivalling all the foreign Ministers and heads of the great Departments of the Government in the splendor of his spacious mansion, in the profusion of his table, and in every indulgence which an empty vanity can covet. He, too, gives brilliant entertainments to the members of Congress and great officers of state, in imitation of the sumptuous Court banquets at the palace. On these occasions, as I have been credibly informed, for the purpose of producing a more dazzling effect on the vision of his locofoco brethren, he actually hires rich chandeliers and other showy democratic ornaments at a charge of ten per cent. on the prime cost, at a splendid china, plate, and glass fancy store on Pennsylvania avenue. But I do not feel disposed to interfere with or molest the editor of the Globe in his enjoyment of noble mansions, luxurious banquets, borrowed lights, and every other external advantage which causes “*little man* to swell into fancied importance,” inasmuch as he enjoys all those advantages, so far as I know, AT HIS OWN EXPENSE. Were it not for the public function of Government Printer that this man has been clothed with, he would be almost too scant a pattern to notice—for Martin Van Buren manages him as a showman does his puppet, and he runs or walks, leaps or jumps, as he is directed. And I must here be permitted to say that we ought not to touch any of the small fry of the shoals until we have done with the sharks and the crocodiles. Curiosity may perhaps invite the philosopher to examine the gnats and the mosquitoes, but not until the tigers and the hyenas have undergone an analysis. I will therefore not say any thing more of Francis P. Blair, but lay him on the shelf for the present; and when Tommy Thumb will afford amusement, we will take him. I will just remark, however, that whenever my constituents ask me what sort of man Blair is, rack it, I tell them of the story of the Irishman who went to see his neighbor, and being asked by his neighbor's wife, how are they coming on at home, replied, “the gray mare had a colt yesterday.” What kind? was the inquiry. Oh! by the powers, *it is a born beauty*. And I tell my constituents, if they cannot imagine how beautiful Blair is, he is just that kind of man that, if you tie his hands behind his back, he will take a deeper bite into a water melon than any man that I ever saw. And if they are not satisfied then, I tell them that there is an old woman in Boston who would make him an excellent wife; for she is so ugly that every morning she has to drink a quart of saffron tea to prevent its striking inward and killing her. That is all I have to say on the present occasion about this great exemplar of locofoco beauty.

Another instance of the deleterious influence of palace manners upon plain republican habits is presented in the person of Mr. Kendall, at the head of the Post Office Department. He, too, after lagging nearly half a century in walks of humble and unostentatious poverty, and after looking up with awe to personages greatly his superior in rank and riches, though not in talents, now begins to love equipage and fine garments, to study graceful attitudes, and to vie with Blair in the magnificence of his soirées. And he, too, like Blair, I have been told, hires at another rich establishment on the avenue most costly democratic garniture, with which to deck his shining saloons on those great occasions. He has, as is believed, by this foolish vanity, although in the annual receipt of six thousand dollars in gold and silver, squandered and gossiped away

the whole of it, and is now almost obliged to subsist upon the contributions of his democratic friends. I feel grieved that the parade and show of palace manners have had so much influence over the mind of Mr. Kendall, because his soul is certainly crammed with more ardent, more scorching, blazing, burning, fiery LOVE FOR THE DEAR PEOPLE, than the souls of all the other patriots, *by profession*, in America. Indeed, his ATTACHMENT to the dear People, or to their CASH, is of so vigorous a character that it will, sooner or later, burn into cinder the little remaining flesh on his skeleton. And he must, eventually, fall a victim to his noble PASSION FOR THE DEAR PEOPLE'S CASH, unless he can find relief in the "excitement of composition."

But let us return, Mr. Chairman, to the table furniture of the President. The remaining bill, which makes up the sum of \$11,191 32, before mentioned, consists of various articles of cutlery, bought from Messrs. Lewis Veron & Co., for \$568; amongst which are table knives plated on steel, silver ferule, and transparent ivory handles, \$300. Dessert set to match, guard carvers, &c. &c.

And now, sir, having completed my enumeration of the table furniture, we may, for a moment, imagine the *elite* of the court, (in their brightest, gayest costumes,) embracing foreign ambassadors, all the great officers of State, major and brigadier generals of the standing army, commodores and commandants of squadrons in the navy, and including the Vice President of the United States, the honorable the Speaker of the House of Representatives, with the Chairmen of the respective Committees of Foreign Relations and Foreign Affairs, and a *very select few* of the most distinguished members of both Houses of Congress, all seated before this sumptuous array of gold and silver ware, blue and gold French China, compotiers on feet, and tambours elevated with three stages, richest cut glass, for use or ornament, plateau with its splendid mirrors, fine gilding, carving, wreaths, garlands, fruits, and vines, and with its sixteen figures presenting crowns bearing lights. I ask you, how would a plain, frank, intelligent, republican farmer *feel*—how would he *look*, if he were caught at a table like that? Why, sir, he would feel as if he knew that *that* was not exactly the *place* for him; and he would *look* "unutterable things." And no wonder; for I have been informed that even Members of Congress have, on some occasions, been so dazzled with the pomp and pageantry and brilliant display of a court dinner, that they could "scarcely eat or speak for half an hour after they had taken their seats at the Presidential board. And, verily, after they had in a good measure recovered the use of their faculties, they were still greatly perplexed to ascertain what dishes might be called for, there being no food whatever *on the table*, and no "bill of fare" immediately at hand to designate the character or nomenclature of the various viands upon which the palace guests were to banquet. The latter embarrassment, however, was soon removed by the butler announcing—

For the first course.—Potage au tortue, Potage à la Julienne, et Potage aux pois.

Second course.—Saumon, sauce d'anchois, Bass piqué à la Chambore.

Third course.—Suprême de volaille en bordure à la galée, Filet de bœuf piqué au vin de Champagne, Pate chaud à la Toulouse.

Fourth course.—Salade d'homard monté, Filets mignons de mouton en chevreuil, Cerveau, de veau, au suprême, Pigeons à la royal aux champignons.

Fifth course.—Bécassines, Canard sauvages, Poulet de Guinée piqué.

Pâtisserie.—Charlotte russe au citron, Biscuit à la vanille décoré, Coupe garnie de gelée d'orange en quartiers, Gelée au marasquin, Gelée au Champagne rose, Blanc mange, Sultane, Nougat, Petits gateaux varies.

Dessert.—Fruits, et glace en pyramide, et en petits moules, Toste d'anchois, Café et liqueur.

Followed by Saturne, Hock, Champagne, Claret, Port, Burgundy, Sherry, and Madeira, "choisest brands."

I shall not, Mr. Chairman, further trespass on the time of the committee by dwelling longer on the great Court Feasts which are stately held in the Palace Banqueting room; but proceed to the performance of the task which I have more immediately before me. Besides the table "furniture," which, as before remarked, cost \$11,191 32, the Court Banqueting room possesses a great variety of very rich and valuable furniture, such as mirrors, mahogany sideboards, mahogany chairs, gilt cornices, window curtains, bronze bowl lamps, antique patterns, gilded, carved, and garnished with stars and swan-necks, mantel ornaments, Brussels carpets, butler's stools, &c. &c. Indeed, there is scarcely any thing wanting to make the Court Banqueting room resemble in its style and magnificence the banqueting halls of the Oriental monarchs, but the erection of a canopy of peacock's feathers over the chair of the President, and a small amphitheatre (for which there is abundant space) covered with brocade and Persian carpets, and furnished with seats for the music, and places for the buffoons and jesters to show their skill.

I will next call your attention, Mr. Chairman, to a schedule, which I have prepared from the "official vouchers" on my desk, of some other articles of democratic furniture, with the price paid for them. Those articles consist of enormous mirrors, looking-glasses, chandeliers, bracket lights, astral and other lamps, and candlesticks; all of which have been purchased since the pure, plain, simple, frugal, economical, republican days of retrenchment and reform commenced. I will read the schedule:

Articles bought from Messrs. Lewis Veron & Co.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|------------|
| 4 Mantel glasses, rich gilt frames, French plates, 100 by 58 inches | - | - | \$2,000 00 |
| Pier Looking-glasses, in rich gilt frames, 108 by 54 inches | - | - | 2,400 00 |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|-------------|
| 2 Mirrors for Green room | - | - | - | - | - | - | 700 00 |
| 2 Mirrors for Dining room | - | - | - | - | - | - | 700 00 |
| Reframing 2 looking-glasses | - | - | - | - | - | - | 100 00 |
| 3 Chandeliers for the East Room | - | - | - | - | - | - | 3,300 00 |
| 3 eighteen-light cut-glass Chandeliers | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1,800 00 |
| 3 sets heavy bronzed Chairs and Rockers for do. | - | - | - | - | - | - | 75 00 |
| 4 pairs two-light Mantel Lamps, with drops | - | - | - | - | - | - | 356 00 |
| 8 five-light Bracket Lights, bronzed and gilt | - | - | - | - | - | - | 300 00 |
| 4 Pier Table Lamps | - | - | - | - | - | - | 180 00 |
| 2 three-light Lamps for East Room | - | - | - | - | - | - | 150 00 |
| 1 two-light Lamp for the Upper Hall | - | - | - | - | - | - | 57 50 |
| 2 three-light Lamps for the Lower Hall | - | - | - | - | - | - | 150 00 |
| 4 Astral Lamps on pier tables | - | - | - | - | - | - | 100 00 |
| 1 four-light Hall Lamp | - | - | - | - | - | - | 100 00 |
| 1 pair Bracket Lights | - | - | - | - | - | - | 60 00 |
| 1 three-light Centre Lamp, supported by female figure | - | - | - | - | - | - | 65 00 |
| 2 Astral Lamps for round tables | - | - | - | - | - | - | 65 00 |
| 2 pairs plated Candlesticks and branches | - | - | - | - | - | - | 85 00 |
| 2 do Chamber Candlesticks | - | - | - | - | - | - | 18 00 |
| 6 do do | - | - | - | - | - | - | 57 00 |
| 9 do Table do | - | - | - | - | - | - | 76 50 |
| 18 extra cut Lamp Glasses | - | - | - | - | - | - | 26 00 |
| 4 French Bracket Lights for East Room | - | - | - | - | - | - | 300 00 |
| 1 pair Mantel Lamps for Audience Room | - | - | - | - | - | - | 20 00 |
| All purchased from L. Veron & Co. | | | | | | | \$13,241 00 |
| Bought from Campbell and Coyle, 3 Hall Chandeliers | - | - | - | - | - | - | 150 00 |
| Bought from Campbell and Brothers, 1 octagon Hall Lamp | - | - | - | - | - | - | 14 00 |
| | | | | | | | \$13,405 00 |

What will the plain republican farmers of the country say when they discover that our economical reformers have expended \$13,405 of the People's cash for *looking-glasses, lamps, and candlesticks*? What would the frugal and honest "*Hoosiers*" think were they to behold a *democratic peacock*, in full court costume, strutting by the hour before golden-framed mirrors, NINE FEET HIGH and FOUR FEET and a HALF WIDE? Why, sir, were Mr. Van Buren to dash into the palace on the back of his "*Roanoke*" race-horse, he could gaze at and admire the hoofs of his charger and his own crown at the same instant of time, in one of those splendid mirrors. Mr. Chairman, there is much truth and sound philosophy in *Poor Richard's* advice:

"Early to bed, and early to rise,
Makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise."

But it is clear that our new economists have little faith in early rising, else they would not have laid out \$7,500 of the People's cash in lamps and candlesticks. The Court fashion of "sleeping on the day and waking on the night," results in keeping the palace doors closed, save to persons entitled to the *entrée*, until ten o'clock A. M. It was but a few days ago that an honest countryman, on his way to the fishing landings, after breakfast, having some curiosity to behold the magnificent "East Room," with its gorgeous drapery and brilliant mirrors, rang the bell at the great entrance door of the palace, and, forthwith, the spruce English porter in attendance, came to the door, and seeing that only "*one of the people*," "*on foot*," was there, slammed it in his face, after saying, "You had better come at seven o'clock; the President's rooms are not open for visitors till ten in the morning." Whereupon the plain farmer turned on his heel, with this cutting rebuke: "*I'm thinking the President's House will be open BEFORE DAY on the 4th of March next for EVERY-body; for OLD TIP is a mighty early riser, and was never yet caught napping—and doesn't allow serfs to be insolent to freemen.*" And, sir, I may add, in confirmation of this honest countryman's belief in *Old Tip's early rising*, that, within the last year, he has been heard, by some of his intimate friends, to remark that, "*HIS HEAD HAD NOT BEEN FOUND UPON HIS PILLOW AT SUNRISE FOR THE LAST FORTY YEARS.*" To this his habit of *early rising* is, perhaps, in a good degree, to be attributed the salvation of his brave army from the scalping-knife and tomahawk of the Indian savage at the battle of Tippecanoe, on the morning of the 7th of November, 1811; for, on that occasion, "he arose at a quarter before 4 o'clock, and sat by the fire, conversing with the gentlemen of his family, who were reclining on their blankets, waiting for the signal, which in a few minutes would have been given for the troops to turn out. The orderly drum had already been roused for the reveille. At this moment the attack commenced." This custom of *early rising*, with the great activity and temperate habits of his past life, will also fully explain why he still enjoys such remarkable vigor in his "moral and physical energies" since he has attained to the age of 67 years. But, sir, I will not indulge in this pleasing theme until I shall have finished my remarks on the regal splendor of the Presidential palace.

Among the "official vouchers" before me, I find one which testifies that Mr. Van Buren, during the administration of General Jackson, was sometimes disposed to gratify his love for rich candlesticks, by acting as *caterer for palace furniture*.

Voucher No. 6.

"Bought at auction, for the President's House, May 30, 1831:

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| "To chintz covered sofa, - - - - - | \$50 00 |
| "2 plated CANDLESTICKS, - - - - - | 20 70 |
| | <u>\$70 00</u> |

M. VAN BUREN."

"Received payment, June 7, 1831.

But I must present you, Mr. Chairman, with some other articles of *democratic furniture* within the palace. What do you opine of the followine specimens—they were all purchased by the plain, republican reformers, from Messrs. Lewis Veron & Co.:

| | |
|--|---------|
| 2 sets of green tea trays, real gold leaves, 5 in each set, - - - - - | \$70 00 |
| ORNAMENTAL RAYS over the door, - - - - - | 25 00 |
| 7 dozen GILT STARS, - - - - - | 17 50 |
| 4 pier tables with Italian slabs, - - - - - | 700 00 |
| 1 round table, blue and gold slab, large, - - - - - | 135 00 |
| 2 Do. do. do. - - - - - | 100 00 |
| 4 bronzed and steel fenders, "new style," - - - - - | 120 00 |
| 24 arm chairs and 4 sofas, stuffed and covered, mahogany work, entirely refinished, and cotton covers, - - - - - | 600 00 |

Can you tell me, sir, in what age of the world it was that real, genuine, plain, hard-handed locofocos first placed *Golden Rays* over their doors, and bedecked their saloons with golden stars? I think it was about the time of that great exemplar of locofoco democracy, Nebuchadnezzar. What do you think, sir, of the democratic rosewood *Piano Forte* (octaves) at the palace, got in exchange for a mahogany one, by paying two hundred dollars of the People's cash for boot money?

I will now direct the attention of the committee to another department of the President's revenues, which I consider highly objectionable. I refer, sir, to the linens, towels, table-cloths, &c., bought with the People's cash for the use of the palace. In this department there appears to have been no bounds to extravagance. What will the head of any household in America think of expending for *such* articles, at one store, within the short period of ten months, the sum of *twenty-four hundred and sixty dollars and twenty-nine cents*? The bills for this expenditure on my desk are entirely too long to take up the time of the committee in reading them; but I have prepared and will submit the following abstract:

Huckaback towels, Irish linens, Tickenberg, Damask diapers, table-cloths, Irish sheeting, MARS QUILTS, flushing, green gauze, slip thread, spools cotton, tapes, and other dry goods, purchased for the use of the President's House, at the store of Darius Clagett, Washington, from the 17th of March, 1837, to the 19th of January, 1838 - \$2,460 29

Contained in three several bills, viz:

| | |
|---|----------|
| 1. Dated 15th March, 1837, and paid 27th May, 1837, - - - - - | 71 33 |
| 2. From the 17th April, 1837, till 2d June, 1837, - - - - - | 1,064 80 |

To this account is appended the following order and receipt:

"June 23, 1837. Major Smith will please to pay the above account for articles purchased for the President's House. A. VAN BUREN."

"Received of Thomas L. Smith the within bill in full. June 24, 1837.

R. B. NALLEY.

"For Darius Clagett."

| | |
|--|------------|
| 3. From 20th July, 1837, till 19th January, 1838, - - - - - | \$1,324 16 |
| "1838, April 26. Received payment in full, thirteen hundred and twenty-four dollars and sixteen cents. | |

"D. CLAGETT."

Endorsed: MAJOR VAN BUREN, at President's House."

Will it not, sir, amaze the frugal housekeepers of the United States to learn that the President should have considered it necessary to *replace* or *repair* the stock of linens on hand and then in use at the palace, by adding thereto the purchase of \$2,460 29 in ten months? Why, sir, a plain republican locofoco may almost be induced to believe that Mr. Van Buren, at that period, had some half dozen daughters, who had been made happy by good husbands, and that they were all about being furnished with splendid outfits from the paternal mansion. This subject is so well understood by the country that I shall not longer dwell upon it. I will, however, remark, that it appears from the vouchers last presented, as well as from others now before me, that Mr. Abraham Van Buren, one of the sons of the President, was frequently engaged in purchasing supplies of "*furniture*" for the palace. Some articles of palace furniture have been procured through Mr. Noland and others; but the principal agent, appointed by the President to take charge over this branch of the *public service* was T. L. Smith, Esq., as the following "official voucher" will abundantly manifest.—Voucher No. 32, in abstract No. 1.

| | |
|--|---------------|
| "To my expenses in making purchases for the President's House, - - - - - | \$262 63 |
| "December 12, 1837. - - - - - | T. L. SMITH." |

I will, in the next place, favor the committee with some real curiosities. Sir, the farmers, mechanics, and laborers of the country will look at the "*official vouchers*" which I shall next offer for your examination with a far deeper interest than they would behold a "*grand review*" of Mr. Van Buren's 1st regiment of "*bloodhounds*," now winning glory and renown in the Florida service.

| | | | | | |
|--|----------------|---|--|--|---------------|
| "Washington, March 5, 1838. | | "The President's House | | To Robt. Keyworth, Dr | |
| The United States, Dr. to Thos. Lamb—for the use of the President's House. | | Sept. 13, 1837. | | To 3½ feet of silver chain and 1½ feet of gilt, for repairing decanter labels - 6 00 | |
| Sept. 20, 1837, 34 table knives ground - - - - - | 1 37½ | 23, | | To repairing 4 decanter labels furnishing chain - - - - - | 2 50 |
| 2 new table knife blades - - - - - | 75 | | | | |
| 2 cook's knife blades - - - - - | 2 50 | | | | |
| | <u>\$4 62½</u> | | | | <u>\$3 50</u> |
| July 7, 1838.—Received payment. THO. LAMB. | | Received payment for Robt. Keyworth from T. L. Smith, Sept. 25, 1837. | | P. SHOEMAKER. | |

| " United States, for the President's House, | | | To James Cuthbert, Dr. |
|---|---|-------|------------------------|
| To making | 3½ dozen pairs sheets, at 87½ cents per pair | 15 75 | |
| Do | 12 dozen pillow cases, at 6½ cents each | 9 00 | |
| To hemming | 12 table cloths, at 25 cents each | 3 00 | |
| Do | 12 dozen glass cloths, at 50 cents per dozen | 6 00 | |
| Do | 12 dozen KITCHEN RUBBERS, at 50 cents per dozen | 6 00 | |
| To making | 6 dozen aprons, at 50 cts. per doz. | 3 00 | |
| To hemming | 6 dozen check dusters, at 37½ cents per dozen | 2 25 | |
| Do | 6 dozen knife cloths, at 50 cts. per dozen | 3 00 | |
| Do | 2 dozen STRAINING CLOTHS, at 50 cents per dozen | 1 00 | |
| Do | 7 dozen chamber towels, at 50 cts. per dozen | 3 50 | |
| Do | 12 dozen table napkins, at 50 cts. per dozen | 6 00 | |
| repairing | 8 pair sheets, at 25 cts. per pair | 2 00 | |
| | | | \$60 50 |

Received payment in full of T. L. Smith, Sept. 7, 1837.
JAS. CUTHBERT."

| " President of the United States, | | | To Wm. M. McCauley, Dr. |
|-----------------------------------|--|------|-------------------------|
| 1837, June 2. | To 2 tin buckets | 2 00 | |
| " " | To MILK STRAINER and SKIMMER | 62½ | |
| " " | 17. To chamber bucket | 2 00 | |
| " " | 20. To 4 dozen tart pans, at 62½ cents per dozen | 2 50 | |
| | | | \$7 12½ |

Received payment of T. L. Smith,
WM. M. MCCAULEY."

| " President's House, | | | To George Savage, Dr. |
|----------------------|---|------|-----------------------|
| 1837, Oct. 1. | Plate basket \$3, 2 Japanned trays 1 50 | 4 50 | |
| Nov. 8. | Two cobweb brushes 2 50 | 2 50 | |
| Dec. 6. | Large Manilla mat | 2 25 | |
| | 2 Large spigots | 1 00 | |
| | 9. Three larding needles, at 25 | 75 | |
| 1838, June 5. | One oval tub 2 25, one keeler 1 25 | 3 50 | |
| | | | \$14 50 |

Washington, July 8, 1833 Received payment.
GEORGE SAVAGE."

| " President's House | | | To George Savage, Dr. |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|--------|-----------------------|
| 1837, April 4. | 2 Alicante mats, at \$1 | \$2 00 | |
| | 1 Manilla do | 2 00 | |
| | 4 hearth brushes, at 75 | 3 00 | |
| | 1 bucket 62, 1 do. 50 | 1 12 | |
| April 11. | 1 covered market-basket | 1 50 | |
| June 1. | 1 churn | 1 25 | |
| July 10. | 2 mats, 37½ | 75 | |
| Aug. 29. | 2 six-hole bottle baskets, at 1 | 2 00 | |
| | 2 hair sifters, at 37½ | 75 | |
| | | | \$14 37 |

Washington, Sept. 27, 1837. Received payment of T. L. Smith,
GEO. SAVAGE."

| " Baltimore, Sept. 2, 1837. | | | Major T. L. Smith, on account of the President's House, |
|------------------------------------|---|---------|---|
| | | | Bought of T. Palmer & Co. |
| 2 sets fine steel tongs and shovel | - | \$28 00 | |
| 10 steel pokers, at \$1 | - | 10 00 | |
| 1 pair tongs and shovel supports | - | 10 00 | |
| 1 LIQUOR STAND | - | 25 00 | |
| 1 set waiters | - | 17 50 | |
| | | | \$90 50 |

Received payment for T. Palmer & Co.
J. SCHUTTE."

| " The President's House, | | | To Chas. F. Bihler. |
|--------------------------|--|--|---|
| | | | To 1 knifeboard and brushes, and chamois for the silver plate |
| | | | \$3 50 |

Received payment of T. L. Smith,
CHAS. F. BIHLER."
19th November, 1838.

| Charles Wood, for the President's House, | | | Bought of A. McIntire, Auct. |
|--|---|------|------------------------------|
| 1 double chamber set | - | \$23 | |
| 1 single do. | - | 16 | |
| Packing and cartage | - | 1 | |
| | | | \$40 |

Received payment,
A. MCINTIRE, Auct."

| " United States, for the President's House, | | | To Robert Keyworth, Dr. |
|---|--|--|--|
| | | | 1837, March 11. To toast-rack for Wm. Cuthbert |
| | | | Received payment, R. KEYWORTH." |
| | | | \$6 |

| " William Cuthbert, for the President's table furniture, | | | To F. Kinchey. |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | | 1837, Dec. 14. 2 sugar vases |
| | | | 4 basements for the same |
| | | | 4 artificial wreaths |
| | | | Received payment for F. Kinchey, THOMAS WHELAN." |
| | | | \$6 00 |
| | | | 6 00 |
| | | | 1 50 |

| " President of the United States, | | | To Wm. M. McCauley, Dr. |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|--|
| | | | 1837, March 20. To 2½ gallon coffe-boiler |
| | | | 1 boiler and 2 do. pots, at 75 |
| | | | 1 coffee biggon |
| | | | I certify the above to be correct. James Cuthbert. |
| | | | March 27, 1837. Received the within account in full. |
| | | | WM. M. MCCAULEY." |
| | | | \$2 25 |
| | | | 2 25 |
| | | | 1 50 |

Washington, Nov. 4, 1837.
President of the United States,
Bought of Campbell & Coyle.

| 1 plate-warmer | | | \$10 50 |
|--|--|--|------------------|
| April 19, 1838. Received payment for Campbell & Coyle, | | | GUSTIN RUSSELL." |
| | | | \$10 50 |

| " The United States, for the President's House, | | | To Samuel Redfern, Dr. |
|---|--|--|----------------------------------|
| | | | 1837, July 1. To 1 dozen brooms |
| | | | ½ do hand scrubs |
| | | | ½ do brooms |
| | | | Received payment, SAM. REDFERN." |
| | | | \$3 75 |
| | | | 1 87 |
| | | | \$7 50 |

| " President's House, | | | To E. M. Linthicum. |
|----------------------|--|--|---|
| | | | 1837, March 16. To 2 B. W. Coffee-pots, at 25 |
| | | | 2 doz. B.W. tablespoons, at 137 |
| | | | 1 do teaspoons, 50 and 87 |
| | | | 2 toasters, a 62 |
| | | | 1 steel |
| | | | 2 gimlets |
| | | | 2 hammers, 40 and 50 |
| | | | I certify the above to be correct. |
| | | | Received payment in full E. M. LINTHICUM." |
| | | | \$4 50 |
| | | | 1 25 |
| | | | 1 25 |
| | | | 25 |
| | | | 90 |
| | | | \$11 50 |

Mr. Chairman, these fifteen small bills which I have just read have been selected from several large bundles of others, because they afford a fair sample of the kind of expenses that are daily incurred on account of the palace establishment. And I must be permitted to say, that I cannot see the propriety or the justice of the President of the United States in saddling the Public with all the little disbursements of his household. He receives an annual salary of TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS, IN GOLD AND SILVER, which gives him \$68 50 per day, or \$2 81 for each and every hour that passes during the four years of his presidential term. If he enjoys himself five hours at a state dinner, he rises from his feast \$14 05 richer than when he sat down. If he sleep eight hours, he is sure to get up from his state bed \$22 48 better off than before he closed his eyes. Neither does the amount of his income depend upon good crops, good seasons, good farming, or good prices. On the contrary, whilst it is not diminished by any or all of these circumstances, which so vitally affect the income of the farmer, the President's salary is in fact always enhanced in value, in proportion as the farmer, the mechanic, and the poor laborer suffer. I ask you, therefore, whether it is just and equal for the President to charge the farmer, the mechanic, and the poor laborer with the cost of making his sheets, pillow-cases, and servants' aprons—with the pitiful price paid for HEMMING, yes, HEMMING his kitchen rubbers, or DISH CLOTHS—straining cloths, or STRAINER RAGS? The poor farmer has not only to purchase a churn, milk-strainers, and skinners for his own family, but he is also taxed to pay for a

churn, milk-strainers, and skimmers for the President of the United States, and for ~~HEMMING~~ HIS STRAINER RAGS into the bargain. The poor laborer with his fifty cents a day, has not only to provide his own coffee pot and pewter spoons, but he is compelled to purchase a coffee pot for the President, and pay for the spoons used by the President's servants. Ay, sir, he is taxed for the cost of *grinding the knives* which the servants in the President's kitchen use in eating their victuals. The President of the United States, in my opinion, should have had more pride of character than to charge the People with the price of his *plate warmers*, his *toasters*, his *market baskets*, his *tart pans*, and *larding needles* to stuff his puddings and *saucessons*. Martin Van Buren must suppose, forsooth, that the farmers, mechanics, and laborers of the United States are so very stupid, or so very good-natured, that they will without a murmur consent to be taxed with the price of his LIQUOR STAND, and for SILVER and GOLD CHAINS to hang labels around the necks of his "*foreign barrel shape flute decanters, with cone stoppers*," to apprise his sleek, prim court guests that he has introduced to the palace cellars "*Marcobrunner Hock*," "*Batailly Claret*," "*Towers Port*," "*Romanee Burgundy*," "*Ravini's Pale Gold Sherry*," and *Red Seal, old, bottled E. I. Maderia*." I had thought that it was bad enough for the farmers, mechanics, and laborers of the country to provide hay and pasturage for Mr. Van Buren's race and carriage horses; to pay for the manure on his potato, celery, cauliflower, and asparagus beds; to pay the hire of a British gardener to topdress his strawberry vines, cultivate his vegetables, and construct bouquets for his palace saloons; but, sir, to ~~HEM HIS DISH~~ RAGS, pay for his LARDING NEEDLES and LIQUOR STANDS is still worse. Ay, sir, worse, if possible, than filling the apartments in the House of the American People with royal and imperial Wiltons, foreign cut wine coolers, French bedsteads, and one hundred dollar artificial flowers. It is worse, sir, because there is a degree of littleness in the thing which demonstrates as clearly as if it were written in characters of living light, that the soul of Martin Van Buren is so very, very, very diminutive, that it might find abundant space within the barrel of a miliner's thimble to perform all the evolutions of the whirling *pirouette* avec *chasee* a suivant, according to the liberal gesticulations practised by the most celebrated *danseurs*.

If there was the least necessity for taxing the People in the manner I have mentioned, I know well they would bear the burden without grumbling; but, sir, there is no intelligent man residing at the seat of Government who is not satisfied that Mr. Van Buren *lays up* annually from fifteen to twenty thousand dollars. Can you inform me, sir, what great expenses encumber his purse, which any other respectable gentleman who occupies a spacious mansion in this city has not to meet? All the individuals at the head of the various Departments of the Government have to hire houses, stables, pasturage, gardens, and gardeners; they have to purchase household furniture, raise their own vegetables, and buy hay for their cattle; and yet they manage not only to get along comfortably, but to hold brilliant soirées, and make quite a display in carriages and equipage, on \$6,000 per annum. There are but two items in the expenditures of the President which can exceed in amount the disbursements for similar objects incurred by other respectable householders in Washington. I refer to his state dinners and palace servants. In regard to the former, a pretty fair estimate can soon be made. He probably gives 25 state dinners during the long sessions of Congress, and 15 at the short sessions—being an average of 20 dinners annually, with 40 guests for each. If we allow \$2 to each guest, the actual cost of a state dinner will be \$80. 20 state dinners would therefore require \$1,600. The sum of \$2 for each guest is a very liberal allowance, and within a few francs of the price paid by Louis Philippe, King of the French, the richest monarch in the world, to his purveyor, for providing the most sumptuous banquets at the Tuilleries and Fontainebleau. In relation to the number of palace servants I shall not be rigid. I am willing to allow 25. In that number I intend, of course, to include all servants that may be employed without as well as within the palace walls. I presume the following *offices* will suffice the President—1 charioteer, 2 postillions, 4 footmen, 2 out-riders, 2 grooms, 4 French cooks, 1 butler, 1 chief carver, 1 cup bearer, 1 porter, 1 turnspit, 1 scullion, and 5 chamber servants. I do not deem it proper to name a "keeper of the President's dogs"—although the "keeper of the King's dogs" in England is no inconsiderable nobleman; and a recent London paper announces that "Lord Kinnaird, the new master of her Majesty's," "buckhounds, has just taken for four months Colonel Cavendish's mansion at St Leonard's," "within about ten miles of Windsor, for the purpose of being within the immediate neighborhood of the place of his *official duties*." Excellent servants can be hired in Washington at from \$8 to \$10, per month—twenty-five servants would, therefore, at \$10 per month, require a disbursement of \$3,000. Now, sir, notwithstanding my admission that twenty-five palace servants may be necessary for Mr. Van Buren, I am unwilling to concede that a real Bank Whig could not go ahead very well with one-fifth of that number. I have supposed, sir, that the state dinners and palace servants of Mr. Van Buren may together possibly demand an expenditure of \$4,500. To that amount may be added about \$2,500 for provisions of every kind, fuel, oil, candles, and corn for forage, and we then have the gross sum of \$7,000, which embraces every cent that Mr. Van Buren annually disburses from his private purse, excepting his expenses for clothing and ornaments to decorate his person. And if he is vain enough to spend his money in the purchase of rubies for his neck, diamond rings for his fingers, Brussels lace for his breast, filet gloves for his hands, and fabrique de broderies de bougran à Nancy handkerchiefs for his pocket—if he choose to lay out hundreds of dollars in supplying his toilet with "Double Ex-

tract of Queen Victoria," Eau de Cologne, Triple Distillée Savon Daveline Mons Sens, Bouquet and Arabic, Corinthian Oil of Cream, L'Huile de Rose, Hedyosmia, Concentrated Persian Essence, and Extract of Eglantine, the latter the most charming perfume for the assembly or *boudoir*, imparting to the handkerchief an agreeable, refreshing, and lasting odor, and "patronized by her most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, and her Royal Highness Dowager Queen Adelaide"—if, I say, Mr. Van Buren sees fit to spend his cash in buying these and other perfumes and cosmetics for his toilet, it can constitute no valid reason for charging the farmers, laborers, and mechanics of the country, with bills for HEMMING HIS DISH RAGS, FOR HIS LARDING NEEDLES, LIQUOR STANDS, and FOREIGN CUT WINE COOLERS.

I have now, sir, arrived at the last class of expenditures for the palace establishment, viz: "*Alterations and Repairs.*" And in this department, after a thorough examination of the official vouchers, I am constrained to state that there exists more extravagance, if not more downright profligacy, than in any other. In the district of country which I represent, a man is said to "*repair his house*" if he patch the old roof, or put on a new one—or if he weatherboard or paint the outside—or if he hang a new door, or mend the hinges, latch, lock, or other fastening of the old one—or if he replace sound panes in the stead of broken window glass—or if he fasten the old mantel piece, or put up a new one—or if he mend the old floor, or lay a new floor. All these various improvements, and a thousand others, of similar character, may be, legitimately, called "*repairs of the house.*" By an act of Congress, passed 3d of March, 1837, the sum of \$7,900 was appropriated "*for alterations and repairs of the President's HOUSE, and for superintendence of the grounds around the same.*" Now, sir, having explained what I understand by "*repairs*" of a HOUSE, and having referred the committee to the law, I will submit sundry bills for disbursements under that law:

Bill of C. Alexander, Upholsterer, from the 11th of March, 1837, till 16th of May, 1837, \$1,037 35

Containing among other charges, the following:

PRIVATE OFFICE

| | |
|------------------------------|--------|
| To scrape the room and size | \$5 00 |
| 22 pieces paper | 22 00 |
| 3½ pieces border | 7 50 |
| putting up 22 pieces paper | 5 50 |
| putting up 3½ pieces border | 1 67 |
| 72 yards scarlet damask | 54 00 |
| 25 yards of silk pd. W. | 18 75 |
| 50 yards of silk binding | 12 50 |
| 3 sets of cornices | 35 00 |
| 36 yards muslin | 27 00 |
| 25 yards cotton fringe | 6 25 |
| 3 pairs of bands | 6 00 |
| 21 rings | 10 50 |
| making three window curtains | 24 00 |
| 51 yards of Brussels carpet | 103 00 |
| 15½ yards border | 31 50 |
| making 51 yards carpeting | 12 87 |
| making 31½ yards border | 7 87 |

GREEN ROOM.

| | |
|---|--------|
| 30 PIECES OF SILVER PAPER | 120 00 |
| 4 pieces border | 16 00 |
| 2 pieces bottom border | 4 00 |
| putting up 30 pieces paper | 11 25 |
| putting up 6 pieces border | 4 60 |
| 96 yards green silk | 108 00 |
| 35 yards of muslin | 24 75 |
| 16 yards cotton fringe | 4 00 |
| making and putting up 2 window curtains | 30 00 |
| 75 yards matting | 23 43½ |
| putting down 75 yards matting | 7 50 |
| 3 pieces green worsted binding | 2 25 |

removing furniture of the *Audience Room* to Major *Earle's room*, and the furniture from this room to the *Audience Room*

Bill of C. Alexander, Upholsterer, from May, 1837, till 10th August, 1837 \$1,135 47

Containing among other charges, the following:

SQUARE ROOM.

| | |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| To taking down 2 window curtains | \$1 00 |
| washing and making again | 7 00 |

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE.

| | |
|---|------|
| taking down the window curtains and taking up the carpet and moving the furniture | 4 00 |
|---|------|

CIRCULAR ROOM.

| | |
|---|-------|
| taking up the carpet and 16 yards of linen and rope | 6 00 |
| washing and repairing 32 chair covers | 22 00 |

CIRCULAR ROOM—2d story.

| | |
|--|------|
| taking down 6 window curtains and taking up the carpet | 4 50 |
|--|------|

BLUE ROOM.

| | |
|---|------|
| taking down the curtains, taking up 2 carpets, and moving the furniture | 4 00 |
|---|------|

putting up 2 window curtains in the MAJOR'S ROOM 1 00

| | |
|--|-----------|
| putting up 1 window curtain in Mr. M. VAN BUREN'S ROOM | 50 |
| 53 yards matting | 31 12½ |
| putting down matting | 8 30 |
| 30 pieces of silver paper | 120 00 |
| 4 pieces of border | 16 00 |
| 2 pieces of bottom border | 4 00 |
| hanging 30 pieces of paper | 11 25 |
| putting up 6 pieces border | 4 50 |
| 43 yards of blue | 131 25 |
| 4 yards silk border | 4 00 |
| 33 yards muslin | 27 75 |
| 18 yards cotton fringe | 4 50 |
| 10 gilding rings | 5 00 |
| making and putting up window curtains | 30 00 |
| By agreement for a carpet, 2 pieces curtain complete, and preparing the President's office | 475 00 |
| Bill of Ed. Burke, Upholsterer, 22d August 1837 | \$985 16½ |

Viz. To making and laying carpets, and making

| | |
|---|----------|
| ing bell pulls | \$404 58 |
| hanging paper | 178 90 |
| materials for repairing old work | 26 18½ |
| taking up old carpets, and taking down old curtains, and relaying and putting up same | 51 00 |
| expenses, &c. | 240 00 |
| divan frame, stuffing, and materials for stuffing | 84 50 |

\$985 16½

Bill of Zachariah Nicholas 25th August, 1837, \$300 80

| | |
|--|----------|
| Cleaning, repairing, and regilding 7 chandeliers, | |
| Cleaning and repairing 3 pair of pier table French figures, | |
| Cleaning and repairing 1½ column astral lamps, | 542 00 |
| Cleaning and repairing 4 pairs cornucopia bracket branches, | |
| Cleaning and repairing 1 pair mantel branch lamps, | |
| Cleaning and repairing 1 pair candlesticks, | |
| Cash paid in Baltimore and Philadelphia for glass and expenses | 50 00 |
| Taking down and putting up chandelier and other ornaments | 70 37½ |
| Paid for packing boxes and cotton | 18 87½ |
| Paid for 11 days' hire of horse and cart, hauling the ornaments and expenses | 29 75 |
| Cleaning 1 passage lamp and chain | 3 00 |
| Cleaning and repairing a plateau | 75 00 |
| Expenses, transportation, and putting up plateau | 11 00 |
| | \$300 00 |

"JULY 10, 1837,
"Received for repairs of chandeliers, &c. for the President's House, one hundred and fifty dollars.
"\$150. Z. NICHOLAS."

I have just read five several bills, which exhibit an expenditure, under the act of Congress last mentioned, for what are denominated "repairs of the President's House" during the first six month's of Mr. Van Buren's term, amounting altogether to the sum of \$4,127 98. By these bills we are taught what is meant by the phrase, "*repairs of the President's House*," in the palace vocabulary. It appears that "*repairs of the President's House*" consist in buying scarlet damask and Brussels carpet for the *President's office*; scraping or scrubbing, and making window curtains for the same; purchasing *silver paper* and green silk for the *Green room*; and removing furniture from the *Audience room* to the Major's room, and from this room to the *Audience room*; taking down window curtains, washing and making them again, for the *Square room*; taking down window curtains, and taking up carpets, in the Circular and Blue rooms; putting up window curtains in the Major's room and Mr. M. Van Buren's room; making and laying down carpets; making bell-pulls, purchasing divans, cleaning and repairing chandeliers, pier tables with French figures, column astral lamps, cornucopia bracket branches, mantel branch lamps, candlesticks and plateaus. I think, sir, the farmers, mechanics, and laborers will judge the foregoing items to be a very strange kind of "repairs of the President's House." They will have no hesitation in pronouncing that there is scarcely a single dollar included in the foregoing bills which can with propriety be said to have been expended in "repairs for the President's House." I heard a gentleman remark, with most cutting severity, while speaking on the subject of "repairs of the President's House," that "it was the duty of the Government who first built the house to *keep it in repair, and shelter its occupant from the rains and winds of heaven*." Don't you believe, sir, that the President adopts a most admirable mode to "shelter" himself from "*the rain and winds of heaven*" by expending the appropriations made by Congress "for repairs of the President's House," in buying *silver paper, scarlet damask, and green silk*; in fixing "*bell-pulls*," cleaning or regilding plateaus and cornucopia bracket branches; taking down and putting up window curtains; laying down and taking up carpets, and in removing the furniture from the *Audience room* to the Major's room, and from the latter to the *Audience room*? The honest truth about the whole matter is this, sir. Scarcely \$500 have been expended during the last twelve years in making *legitimate, real, permanent* "*repairs of the President's House*," excepting on one occasion for painting the entire building inside and outside, for which a special appropriation of \$3,482 was voted by Congress. The Representatives of the People have been gulled—yes, sir, actually *gulled*, with the idea that large annual appropriations have been necessary for "*repairs of the President's House*," that it might not "*fall to pieces and go to ruin*," and when those appropriations have been made for "*repairs of the President's House*," they have invariably been expended in the manner I have indicated.

But, sir, the phraseology of the act of Congress passed 3d March, 1837, as before mentioned, embraces the word "*alterations*" as well as the word "*repairs*." What do you understand by the term "*alterations*?" I can tell you what that word signifies at the palace. If the broad walls of the East room have been hung with "*paper of the lemon color, with a rich cloth border*," and if the lemon color should be proscribed by the "palace dandies as unfashionable, the word "*alterations*" would in this supposed case apply with remarkable clearness, and would enable the master of the House to substitute "a rich, chaste and beautiful" silver paper, with golden borders, for the unfashionable "lemon color, with a rich cloth border." It sometimes happens that the "*alterations*" suggested to the President are so various in their character that he is unable to decide on their respective merits. In difficulties of this sort he has been known to call in the aid of a professional artist, by whose *plans and drawings* the mind of the President may be aided in arriving at safe conclusions. Hence, amongst the official vouchers before me I was not surprised to find the following:

"Dr. the United States to Robert Mills, Cr. - - - \$20 00
1837, July, for *drawing of plans, &c.* of the President's House -
Received the above in full of Thomas L. Smith. ROBERT MILLS."

The various suggestions, drawings, *plans, &c.*, submitted to the President, finally resulted in the adoption and completion of some very material "*alterations*" in the palace; the specifications whereof have been duly detailed in several reports made by the Commissioner of Public Buildings to Congress. The report of that officer, dated in December, 1837, states, on the subject of the President's house, as follows:

"The *arcaded screen* dividing the corridor from the hall in this building has been completed, as also the *screen* at the north entrance into the hall, both of which were *so essential to the comfort of the house*. To add further to this an *air furnace* has been constructed in the basement story, and conduits formed from the same, so as to convey the heated air into the corridors below and above, as also the great dining room and other rooms."

"'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful," that none of the former Presidents—including General Jackson—never discovered that an "*arcaded screen*, dividing the corridor from the hall," and a screen at the north entrance into the hall, were *so essential to the comfort of the House*. "'Twas strange, 'twas passing strange," that an "*air furnace* had not been constructed," with the people's cash, at an earlier day, by the operation of which the occupant of the palace would have reduced his fuel bills.

The President's commissioner, by his report, dated in December, 1838, informs us of sundry other important "alterations" within the palace, constructed during that year, amongst which is the following:

"In the basement story a reservoir has been constructed, which, by means of a double forcing pump, supplies the kitchen, pantry, BATHS, &c. with fine pure water."

Ah! sir, I thought we should soon arrive at the *Grecian Baths*, for without them the luxuries of the palace would be incomplete. As early as the days of Homer the delights of a *palace bath* were highly appreciated. He writes that a *bath* was prepared for Ulysses, the son of Laertes, at the palace of Circe, and that, after he had enjoyed the luxury of the bath, he was anointed with costly and delightful perfumes, and attired in gay apparel. I am not a little surprised that Mr. Van Buren is the first President who made the discovery that the pleasures of the warm or tepid bath are the proper accompaniments of a palace life. For it appears that our former Presidents were content with the application, when necessary, of the simple shower bath. Albeit one of them (Mr. Adams) indulged his aristocratic propensities, almost every morning, the weather being favorable, by aristocratically *walking* some 90 or 100 rods, "between day-break and sunrise," to the banks of the Potomac, and then and there aristocratically laving his aristocratic body, after the manner of the antediluvians, *in the waters of the river*. And, on some occasions, more aristocratically still, swimming across the stream, about one mile and three quarters wide. At the royal baths, in some of the palaces of Europe, servants are in attendance who immediately after the princely bather leaves the laver, gently whip his back and limbs with wet birch rods, remove the hard skin from his feet with pumice stone, anoint his body with triple distillée Arabic, and present a little white wine, sugar and citron, to invigorate him before he lapses in a sweet slumber. I presume the luxury of all these royal practices will be duly appreciated at the Presidential palace. This luxury might doubtless be materially enhanced by causing such "*alterations*" to be constructed as would introduce to the President's baths, by means of particular conduits and "double forcing pumps," a copious supply of sea water, after the manner of the magnificent bath establishments of the old Roman aristocracy.

Withholding, on the present occasion, all further observations relative to the palace baths, let us now make an examination of the moneys expended by the *reformers* for *furniture*. You will recollect, Mr. Chairman, that I presented to the committee, in the early part of my remarks, a list of the various appropriations made by Congress since the retirement of John Q. Adams, "for *alterations* and *repairs* of the President's House," planting trees, improving grounds, &c. Those appropriations amounted, altogether, to the sum of \$88,722 58. I will now, sir, offer to the committee a similar list of appropriations, during the same period, for *furniture* for the President's House.

Act of 3d March, 1829. For furnishing the President's House under the direction of the President - - - - - \$14,000 00

Act of 2d March, 1831. For furniture and repairs of furniture - - - - - \$5,000 00

Act of 2d March, 1833. Furnishing President's House, in addition to proceeds of such decayed furniture as he may direct to be sold - - - - - \$20,000 00

Act of 30th June, 1834. "For COMPLETING the furniture of the President's House" - - - - - \$6,000 00

Act of 3d March, 1837. For furniture of the President's House - - - - - \$20,000 00

To these appropriations may be added the proceeds, as before stated, made by the sale of decayed and unfashionable furniture, \$5,680 40, and we have the gross sum of SEVENTY THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED AND EIGHTY DOLLARS AND FORTY CENTS, expended by the *reformers* for *furniture* for the President's House. And this, too, sir, after the *reformers* had themselves contended and insisted that the President's House had been furnished by John Q. Adams in a style of "regal magnificence." But let us look a little closer at the matter. By the 14th clause of the 1st section of the act of 30th June, 1834, six thousand dollars were appropriated "for COMPLETING the furniture of the President's House." The *furniture* was therefore *complete* after the expenditure of this \$6,000. Now, Mr. Chairman can you tell me how it came to pass that Mr. Van Buren expended \$24,127 98 on the palace furniture during the summer and autumn of 1837? The last sum (\$24,127 98) consists of \$20,000 appropriated by the act of 3d of March, 1837, and \$4,127 98, the amount of the five bills already read, for what are denominated "*repairs and alterations*." Is it to be credited that the reformers have destroyed, in the short space of three years, furniture worth \$24,127 98! About \$8,000 annually wasted; a larger sum by \$2,000, than has been invested in the furniture of the princely mansion on the north side of Franklin square, and immediately opposite the palace. If an expenditure of \$6,000 is sufficient to provide appropriate and suitable furniture for the most elegant private mansion in the city of Washington, what will the plain, republican farmers of the country say to the expenditure of \$70,680 40 by the *reformers* in *completing* the furniture of the President's House, which was crowded with the richest furniture on the globe at the time the *reformers* came into possession?

The President's House, from the time of its destruction in 1814, was not refinished and occupied until September, 1817. It was then taken possession of by Mr. Monroe. The furniture in the former building had been destroyed with it, and the little that had been purchased after-

wards, for the accommodation of President Madison, in the house which had been rented for him, (the eastern end of the seven buildings,) was only second-hand furniture, and of trifling value; there was not a carpet in the house, the floor having been covered with blue and green baize, which was entirely worn-out; indeed, it is said that there was not a single article of furniture used by Mr. Madison suited to the new building. Mr. Monroe, however, had considerable furniture, of good quality, most of which he had procured abroad as American Minister, and the residue for his accommodation as Secretary of State. This furniture, including a small service of plate, he placed in the President's House, at a valuation (9,071 22½) fixed upon it by two of the most respectable citizens of the District. About the same period, an order, *limited in amount to twelve thousand dollars*, was transmitted by Mr. Monroe to the Messrs. Russell and La Farge at Havre, with instructions to procure some articles of furniture, "strong, massive, and durable," to be manufactured for the rooms for which they were respectively intended. These gentlemen, acting under the erroneous impression that the house of the President was to be furnished in the style of a *king's palace*, deviated greatly from the instructions of Mr. Monroe, not only in the richness and splendor of the articles purchased, but actually ran up their bills to 92,085 85 francs, or \$18,417 17, being \$6,417 17 higher than the extent of the order which they had received. All this splendid French furniture was forthwith shipped to America, and Congress subsequently granted the necessary appropriation to cover the deficit. Although Mr. Monroe was somewhat unfortunate in the selection of his agents, he was little to blame in the whole affair; for many of the articles deemed proper for the President's House could not at that day have been procured in the United States; and, besides, the statute which directs "that all furniture purchased for the President's House shall be, as far as practicable, of American or domestic manufacture" was not enacted until May 22, 1826. The furniture of the President's House was further increased by the purchase of articles in Philadelphia and other Atlantic cities, from time to time, during the administration of Mr. Monroe, amounting to \$22,511 60½. The entire sum, therefore, invested in furniture by him was \$50,000, viz.

| | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|-------------|
| Private furniture, appraised at | - | - | - | - | - | - | \$9,071 22½ |
| Bought in France | - | - | - | - | - | - | 18,417 17 |
| Purchased in Philadelphia, &c. | - | - | - | - | - | - | 22,511 60½ |

\$50,000 00

This sum was paid by three several appropriation bills passed by Congress, to wit:

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------|
| March 3, 1817, for | - | - | - | - | - | - | \$20,000 |
| April 20, 1818, for | - | - | - | - | - | - | 20,000 |
| April 20, 1818, for deficiency | - | - | - | - | - | - | 10,000 |

\$50,000

To the rich stock bought by Mr. Monroe, there was added during the administration of John Q. Adams other furniture, including a service of plate, taken from Mr. Crawford at the time he left Washington, upon retiring from the head of the Treasury Department; all of which amounted to the sum of \$20,000, and for which Congress had granted the necessary appropriations, viz:

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------|
| February 25, 1825, | - | - | - | - | - | - | \$14,000 |
| March 2, 1827, | - | - | - | - | - | - | 6,000 |

The entire cost, therefore, of the furniture in the President's House on the day the *reformers* took possession was precisely \$70,000. But all the fine things which had been gathered into the palace by Monroe and Adams *were not grand enough for our reformers*; they must be provided with huge barn-door size mantel and pier mirrors, in golden frames, magnificent cut-glass chandeliers, royal and imperial Wiltons, Italian gold slab pier tables, golden stars, golden rays, Turkish divans, French comfortables, foreign cut wine coolers, barrel-shape flute decanters, with cone stoppers, and one hundred dollar artificial flowers. Our *reformers* would not be satisfied without the dulcet notes of the "*rosewood piano forte*," (octaves;) nor could they enjoy their French cookery without the zest of a *golden spoon*. Oh! how they longed after the genuine democratic gold and silver service of the RUSSIAN BARON, "*le General Baron de Tuzill*." Hence our *reformers* have expended seventy thousand six hundred and eighty dollars and forty cents to purchase all these locofoco baubles. The *furniture*, therefore, at the present time, in the President's palace, cost the people the sum of \$140,680 40. What, sir, will the plain farmers of the country say—what will our industrious and frugal mechanics say—what will the poor daily laborers say about the expenditure of \$140,680 40 in providing furniture for *one house*?—and *such* furniture! Is there a locofoco within this Hall of the people's Representatives who will justify this extravagance? If there be, I denounce him as the tool of the Executive. The plain, republican citizens of the United States will not excuse Martin Van Buren for paying for a bunch of artificial flowers to adorn his table a larger sum than the *yearly wages* of a poor hireling; ay, sir, more than the annual pension granted by the nation to the brave and heroic soldier who endured the seven years' toil of our Revolutionary struggle.

Immediately after the installation at New York in 1789 of General Washington as President under the new constitution, he took possession of the house in Pearl street, in which the President of the Old Congress had resided. After the removal of the seat of Government to Phila-

delphia, President Washington lived in a house in market street, in that city, which had been leased by Robert Morris to the Government at an annual rent of \$3,000. The rents and all the other expenses of the President's establishment were paid out of the Treasury, *but Gen. Washington received no pay whatever for his services.* On the contrary, he considered he was in duty bound to relinquish to the people of the United States two hundred thousand dollars, the amount of his salary for eight years' services as President, in consideration of the rents and other expenditures incurred by the nation in maintaining his establishment while in their service. How does the conduct of George Washington contrast on this subject with that of Martin Van Buren? Washington and Van Buren! Bless my soul, what a falling off! [Loud laughter.] Yes. What a fall was there, my countrymen! Then you, and I, and all of us fell down. After looking back down the long line of illustrious worthies who have occupied the Presidential chair in this country, is it not enough to make the heart of a patriot bleed, and to cover his cheek with blushes to see in what that illustrious line ends! What has Martin Van Buren ever done? Who can tell me? I can inform you, sir; he has not only taken *twenty-five thousand dollars in gold and silver* for his annual salary, but he has compelled the people to pay for HEMMING HIS DISH-RAGS into the bargain. Why, sir, he knows no more of the honorable and high-minded feelings of the patriot than he does of the hardships of a soldier. I think I can tell about all he knows upon that subject; and it is expressed in the nightly prayer of an Irishman impressed as a marine: "God be thanked that I never killed any body, and that nobody never killed me! God bless the world, and huzza for the navy!" [Loud laughter.] I do not see why it is that such a nation as this should ever have made so much of so small a pattern of a man. He never originated any thing to benefit his country; he never fought to secure her glory; he has done nothing but plot to elevate himself; and yet here are we all thrown into turmoil about one little man, as if he was a hero or a statesman—as if, in the hour of his country's extremity, he had been the first to face her foes and present his body to their bullets, and, when her danger was past, had retired, like another Cincinnatus, to his plough, and had shone yet more in all the peaceful virtues of private life than he had before shone in the field. Placed by the side of Harrison, what is he? and what has he done? Let him read General Harrison's letter to Bolivar, when that pure-minded patriot pointed out to the great Liberator the path of true glory and immortal fame, recommending him to take Washington for his model, and to become, like him, the father of his country. This would have sent him down to posterity with a shining brow. My soul rejoices that we are at last going to have a President something like the Father of the Revolution. Why did the American people advance General Washington to the Presidency? Because he had been the Father of his Country, living and acting only for her. Why did they then choose the elder Adams? Because he had been the eloquent defender of independence; because his living words had stirred the fire and blood in the hearts of his countrymen, and had inspired them to do and die in the cause of freedom. Why did they make Jefferson their Chief Magistrate? Because he had been the eloquent writer of the Declaration of Independence. And why Madison? Because he had been the able, the profound expounder of the constitution. Why Monroe? Because he was the last of that band of worthies who had shed their blood in our revolutionary struggle. With him ended the revolutionary race. Why had they then appointed John Q. Adams? Because of his long diplomatic experience, his known political wisdom. Why Jackson? Let New Orleans answer. And why Martin Van Buren? Echo answers, why? It is true he put on General Jackson's coat, and drew on his heavy military boots, and tried to straddle into his footsteps, and that is about all.

I had a mind to turn the attention of this committee to a description of Martin Van Buren, by his loving friend and cousin, Alexander H. Everett, of Massachusetts, but I will not do it—the man is small enough already. Let his friends here point out any one act he ever did to benefit his country—let them lay their finger on one single bright page in her annals which has ever been illuminated by deed of his. When we would talk of Harrison, we can say, and say truly, to all the people of the Northwest: he was a father to your country. He saved it from a savage foe. He made all the Indian treaties by which you hold your lands in peace, and he promoted the improvement and well being of all your settlements after he had first rendered them secure. Under his government there was no Indian war, like the contest in Florida, hatched in fraud, and prosecuted in reckless improvidence. The Indians themselves admitted the fairness and equity of all his proceedings. They could rely on his word, they trusted his sincerity; no army was there to march to remove them from the lands they had sold to the white man; they retired voluntarily and peacefully. But how is it now? You cannot negotiate a single Indian treaty, but what your democratic commissioners turn out to be such fraudulent rascals that the Indians all complain they are cheated, and being themselves, for the most part, men of uprightness and integrity, they become indignant at the wrong, and set your power at defiance. What was the history of your Creek war? How did it originate, and were you not obliged to remove the Cherokees by the bayonet, thus compelling them to observe a treaty they had never made? Is there not at this hour a storm brewing amongst the Winnebagoes in the Northwest, because, like the Seminoles, they were cheated in a treaty? It will not do to saddle the blame of the wars upon the Indians, and, when charged with all the millions you have spent, to say: we cannot help it—it is not our fault. You could have helped it, and it is your fault. Your own

abominable frauds and oppressions were the cause of the war, and you are justly chargeable with every dollar it has cost the people.

But, sir, I must come back for the present to the "*old grudge*," the expenditure for the palace. On the 2d of March, 1797, Congress passed an act directing "decayed, out of repair, or unfit for use" furniture to be sold, and the proceeds of sale, and so much of a sum as the President may judge necessary, not exceeding \$14,000, to be invested in new furniture for the use of the President, (the elder Adams.) In December, 1800, the Government was removed to its permanent seat at Washington, but before its removal, viz., the 24th of April, 1800, the sum of \$15,000 had been granted to provide "furniture for the house erected in Washington for the President, to be expended by the heads of State, Treasury, War, and Navy." The furniture was subsequently increased by three several appropriations of \$14,000 each by acts passed 3d March, 1805, 2d March, 1809, and 26th July, 1813, respectively. There had, therefore, been expended on the furniture of the President's House from the time of its first occupancy in December, 1800, up to the period of its destruction by the British army, \$57,000.

I shall not descend to the basement story of the palace, and remark upon the furniture which appertains to the numerous rooms provided for the stewards, cooks, and other servants, but content myself with the single declaration, that all the arrangements upon the basement story are in exact harmony with the style and magnificence displayed in the other stories of the palace.

I have heard many improvements suggested by court favorites as proper for the interior of the palace, amongst which are the following: 1st, a library of *gilt bound* books; 2d, a cabinet or museum of medals, coins, gems, minerals, shells, plants, insects, worms, fishes, birds, and beasts; 3d, a suit of rooms garnished with paintings by Titian, Rubens, Rembrandt, Raffaele, Salvator Rosa, Vandyke, Leonardo da Vinci, Carlo Dolci, Pompeo Battoni, Andrea Sacchi, and

"Corregio's Magdalen and Night,
The matron of the Chair,
Guido's fleet coursers in their flight,
And Claudes at least a pair."

These paintings would form a beautiful contrast with the charming *French prints* now understood to be within or near the palace. All these improvements would, of course, be properly chargeable under the head of "*Alterations and repairs of the President's house*." Other "*alterations and repairs of the President's house*" have doubtless been mooted, but with more abundant caution; these consist in the erection of a *throne* and the purchase of a *crown*, *diadem*, *sceptre*, and royal jewels. The *pro* and *con* arguments in regard to these *alterations and repairs* readily suggest themselves. On the one side, it may be contended that the introduction of these palace appendages might alarm the democracy; that, at most, they are but the *empty ensigns* of royalty; and that, at all events, it will be best not to agitate the matter until the sub-Treasury system shall be firmly established, and the projected law for raising a standing army of 200,000 men shall be fully enacted. On the other hand, it may with great propriety be alleged that, as we already have the palace, with its tabourets and other splendid regalia, palace grounds, palace gardens, grand levees, state banquets, Court ceremonials, Court costumes, stalls for the royal steeds, and royal revenues, we should not hesitate about a *throne*, which according to the definition of Napoleon Bonaparte, is "*six planchis de sapin et un tapis de velours*"—OR SIX FINE PLANKS AND A VELVET CARPET. Why refuse a *crown*, which is merely a broad ring of gold, with diamonds and precious stones set in ouches, the ring being attached to a velvet-gold-embroidered cap, terminating on the top with a golden ball or cone? Why deny a *diadem*, or richly variegated riband, forming the border of a velvet cap garnished with gold tufts and tassels? Why reject a *sceptre*, or stick thirty inches in length, and lackered with golden varnish? And, as to the royal jewels, they can doubtless be easily procured, under the excellent counsel of the *twenty-two Kings*, whose good wishes have heretofore been manifested in recommending to the favorable consideration of Mr. Van Buren the INDEPENDENT TREASURY. Moreover, there is not a letter, or syllable, or word, or clause, or section, or article, found in the Constitution which forbids the introduction of these regalia; then why hesitate? Will not the pseudo-democracy be better pleased with a *President* who possesses not only the power, but is also covered with the trappings of royalty? Cæsar was omnipotent at Rome with the plain title of *Consul*; Cromwell, with the simple name of *Protector*, controlled all the power of England; *Consul* Bonaparte was as absolute and despotic as the *Emperor* Napoleon.

Sir, I am unwilling to grant the appropriation of \$3,665 in the bill under consideration "for *alterations and repairs of the President's house*," because the money may be expended in the erection of a *throne* within the "Blue Elliptical Saloon," and for the purchase of a *crown*, *diadem*, *sceptre*, and *royal jewels*, with as little impropriety as former appropriations "for *alterations and repairs of the President's house*" have been expended; and because, after these regalia shall have been prepared, it will not be very inconvenient for *President* Van Buren to exchange his splendid Spanish cloak for a royal stole, and, having placed the crown upon his head, the diadem on his brow, and bedecked his person with the royal jewels, with the lackered sceptre in his hand, take his seat on that throne. And thus this democratic *President*, although deprived of the *title* of royalty, will be invested, not only with its *prerogatives*, but with its *trappings* also.

If, sir, it is inexpedient in these hard times to appropriate the money of the People for

opening and improving harbors, for erecting light-houses, for constructing roads and canals, for improving the navigation of rivers, or completing the Cumberland road, and for other objects of real utility, I think the times are too hard to apply the cash of the People "for alterations and repairs" of the President's palace. I believe that the individual who now occupies that mansion might suggest such "*alterations and repairs*" as would not meet the views of the gentleman who will occupy the same house on the 4th of March next; and, as the building is in excellent condition—as it is as splendid as the palace of the Autocrat of all the Russias, and as richly adorned as the grandest oriental mansion, I think the present occupant might be content with it, particularly as the furniture, since the accession of General Jackson, has cost the People of the United States no less a sum than \$70,680, and the palace grounds and gardens, during the same period, the additional sum of \$88,722 58. This, one would think, might, at all events, be sufficient to satisfy a plain, frugal, economical, hard-handed democrat. But, whether he shall be satisfied or not, I hope the committee will not pass the bill in its present shape: for I do not think the People want any more *slippery elms* on the President's grounds—they had rather see a good row of buckeyes.

Sir, I have been controlled in the remarks which I have deemed it my duty to submit in relation to the President's palace by the same motives and principles which governed the Jackson party, of which I was an ardent supporter, during the administration of John Q. Adams. You will doubtless recollect that the Jackson party at that day, both in and out of Congress, went into the investigation of the palace concerns most thoroughly. On the 3d of March, 1825, the following joint resolution was adopted by the two Houses:

"Resolved, &c., That the Commissioner of the Public Buildings be, and he is hereby, authorized and directed to TAKE AN INVENTORY OF THE FURNITURE OF THE PRESIDENT'S HOUSE, at such time as may be convenient to the President, and to deliver a copy thereof to the President elect, and one copy to each House of Congress."

In pursuance of this resolution, a schedule of all the furniture of the President's House, including the articles in the bed-chambers and kitchen, was reported to Congress on the 5th of December, 1825. Subsequently, (8th February, 1826,) the House of Representatives, through its committee, requested the then President to communicate in what manner the last appropriation for furniture for the President's House had been expended. After the information had been obtained, the committee made a report to the House, viz: 17th March, 1826, to which they not only annexed a memorandum of all the table linens, sheets, pillow cases, chamber towels, &c. in the palace, but also a list of all the articles purchased by Mr. Adams from the 10th of March, 1825, till January, 1826. Embraced in the list were the following items:

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---------------|
| " 1825. May 26. | Legare Kervand, <i>billiard table</i> | - | - | - | - | \$50 00 |
| " June 6. | Littlejohn, for <i>cues</i> | - | - | - | - | 5 00 |
| " Dec. 29. | B. F. Pomeroy, <i>billiard balls</i> | - | - | - | - | 6 00 |
| 1826. Jan. 1. | P. Thompson, chessmen | - | - | - | - | 23 50 |
| | | | | | | <hr/> \$84 50 |

Who does not remember the indignant bursts of eloquence that were then launched forth within this Hall against gambling, waste of time, neglect of public business, extravagance, &c. &c.? With what commendable piety and holy zeal did the leading champions of retrenchment and reform at that day exhort all devout Christians to open their eyes and lend their ears to a full and thorough examination of these subjects! I have before me, sir, a speech on this subject delivered on the 4th of February, 1828, by the Hon. JAMES BUCHANAN on Mr. CHILTON's resolution to *retrench the expenditures* of the General Government, in which he elaborately discusses the merits of this enormous expenditure, and shows exceeding great regard for "the scruples of the pious" in regard to the purchase with the public money of instruments for amusement; an example of wastefulness and extravagance which he appears to have apprehended "must have a most powerful and extensive influence upon the morals of the youth of our country."

It turned out, indeed, in the end, that Mr. Adams had really paid for the billiard table, &c. out of his own pocket. But no matter, the Jackson party in Congress continued to denounce the purchase of the *billiard table, balls, cues, and chessmen*. These were the articles of palace furniture upon which *we Jackson men* arraigned the administration of Mr. Adams before the country. These articles of extravagance amounted to \$84 50. We were afraid to pay for a *billiard table* for the President to spend his precious time at, because he had so many important duties to perform. The arguments used at that time will tingle in the ears of the old Jackson men when they shall discover, what is the fact, that two hundred dollars have been paid for boot money on the exchange of a MAHOGANY *piano-forte* for one constructed of rosewood, and that the very reformers who made such an everlasting din about the price of a *billiard table*, have expended more than seventy thousand dollars of the people's cash for nine feet mirrors, gold knives, forks, spoons, rays, stars, &c., not omitting, however, the bills for HEMMING Mr. Van Buren's DISH RAGS and STRAINER CLOTHS, and for GRINDING his servants' knives.